5/ Notes on Lucretius

I. Ascent

1. *The Opening* (*I 1–148*)

Lucretius' work is a poetic exposition of Epicurean philosophy. The reader who opens the book for the first time and peruses its opening does not know through firsthand knowledge that it is devoted to the exposition of Epicureanism. The poet leads his reader toward Epicureanism; he makes him ascend to Epicureanism. Accordingly he begins his work by appealing to sentiments which are not peculiar to Epicureans or by making statements which are not peculiarly Epicurean. The reader of the poem is in the first place its addressee, Memmius, a Roman of noble descent. The importance of his being a Roman is shown by the word which opens the poem: *Aeneadum*. He is to ascend from being a Roman to being an Epicurean.

The ascent from being a Roman to being an Epicurean requires that there be a link between Romanism and Epicureanism. Being a Roman must be more than being a member of one city among many or of any city other than Rome. The Romans, the Aeneads, are the descendants of the goddess Venus who alone guides the nature of things (21). Being a Roman means to have a kinship, denied to other men, with the guide or ruler of the whole. The goddess Venus is the joy not only of the Romans but of gods and men simply; she is the only being that guides the birth or growth not only of Romans and beings subject to Roman rule but of all living beings simply; she brings life, calm, lucidity, beauty, smiling, and light everywhere, although not at all times; she arouses fond sexual love everywhere on earth; nothing glad and lovely emerges without her anywhere (1–23). Lucretius opens his poem with a praise of Venus because that goddess—and not, for instance, Jupiter Capitolinus—is the link be-

tween Rome and all living beings; through Venus, and only through Venus, does one ascend from Romanism to Epicureanism.

Lucretius' praise of Venus also serves the more obvious purpose of making her willing to grant him two favors. Since nothing glad and lovely emerges without her, the poet asks her to help him in writing his poem by granting abiding charm to what he will say. He tries to induce her to grant him this favor by telling her that his poem will deal with the nature of things, that is, her mighty empire, and that it is to benefit Memmius, who has always been her favorite (21–28). He further asks Venus to grant peace everywhere, to all mortals; she alone can restore peace since Mars, the god of war, can be subdued only by his desire for Venus; when his desire will have been fully aroused, he will not be able to refuse her request to grant peace to the Romans; for as long as the fatherland is in the grip of war, Lucretius will lack the equanimity needed for writing his poem as perfectly as he wishes and Memmius, compelled to come to the assistance of the common weal, will lack the leisure needed for listening to the poet's verses (29–43). Only Venus can give charm to Lucretius' poem, and only Venus can restore the peace which is required for writing and enjoying that poem. This is the reason that Lucretius, although he speaks of Mars, is silent about the fact that the Romans are descendants not only of Venus but of Mars as well: Venus, not Mars, is the link between Romanism and Epicureanism.

Lucretius concludes his invocation of Venus by supporting his prayer for peace with a reminder of what she owes to herself not because she is Venus but because she is a divine being: all gods enjoy deathless life in perfect peace. By this he means in the first place that since all gods enjoy perfect peace, they all are able and willing to grant peace to men. But he also means something else: the gods enjoy perfect peace because they are self-sufficient, free from all pain and all danger, in no wise in need of men and therefore not to be swayed by men's good or bad deeds; they are altogether remote from the affairs of men (44–49). The six verses which conclude the invocation of Venus must be understood as part of their pre-Epicurean context. The poet will repeat them literally in an Epicurean context; there he introduces them by stating explicitly that the view of the gods which they convey contradicts the popular view (II 644–645). No such statement accompanies the verses when they occur first. In their pre-Epicurean context they do not exclude the possibility that the gods, who do not need men in any way and cannot be swayed by any human merits and demerits, bestow blessings on some men from sheer kindness whenever it pleases them, just as Venus has always willed to bestow the greatest blessings on Memmius (26–27) and has succeeded in doing so. In asking Venus to grant abiding charm to his verses and peace to the Romans, the poet is not necessarily trying to arouse the goddess to action; he may merely wish to guide her in the action which she herself spontaneously started, the action

of benefiting Memmius; he merely shows her how her entirely unsolicited wish to benefit Memmius can be fulfilled most perfectly. After all, he never suggested that Venus is omniscient; he never asked her to be his Muse or to inspire him with knowledge of the Epicurean doctrine. The six verses do cast doubt on the divinity of Mars, who does not always enjoy peace and who cannot be free from all pain since he suffers from the everlasting wound of sexual desire.[1] Be this as it may, we remain closer to the accepted view if we assert that the verses in question render doubtful the immediately preceding prayer to a divine being and the poet's singling out of Venus as worthy of higher praise than any other deity; nay, that they render doubtful the very being of all gods as worshiped by the Romans and men in general. The verses thus understood would indicate that the invocation of Venus and especially the praise of Venus is a falsehood, if a beautiful falsehood (cf. II 644–645). They would point toward the end of a movement which begins with the turning to Venus and to Venus alone: not all gods as worshiped by the Romans are equally remote from the true gods; Venus, the joy of the gods as worshiped by the Romans, comes closer to the true gods than any other gods worshiped by the Romans. Since Venus owes her predominance in the opening of Lucretius' poem primarily to her being the ancestress of the Romans, the movement from Venus to the true gods cannot but affect profoundly the status of Rome.

After the poet has addressed Venus in forty-nine verses, there remains one more thing for him to do before he can begin to expound the Epicurean doctrine: he must address Memmius. He must make it as certain as he can that Memmius will listen to the true account with a mind free from all cares and not reject it with contempt before he has grasped it. He tries to arouse Memmius' attention by indicating to him the grandeur of the poem's theme. That theme will indeed not be Venus. The poet will "begin" to speak to Memmius about "the highest ground of heaven and the gods," and he will reveal the origins from which nature creates the things and makes them grow and into which she dissolves them again—those origins which "we" call *materies*, *genitalia corpora*, and *semina rerum*, but also, without any reference to life or sex, the first bodies, since everything else that is comes from them (50–61). The nature which creates the things out of the first bodies and dissolves the things into the first bodies cannot be herself a first body; one must pause for a moment to wonder whether the creative-destructive nature is not a god dwelling in heaven; being destructive as well as creative, he could not be Venus as celebrated in the very beginning; but the end of the passage seems to make it certain that the gods too stem from the first bodies. The first bodies cannot be expected to possess the splendor and the charm of the gods; they cannot be expected to be attractive. Why then should Memmius become concerned with those bodies? Why indeed should he not turn his back on Lucretius' poem with contempt?

In order to see why knowledge of the unattractive origins of everything including heaven and gods is most attractive, one must consider how men lived before the quest for these origins started. Before that event human life was abject, crushed as it was by dreadful religion. It was a Greek who first dared to face the terror of religion and to take a stand against it. He was not deterred by the dreadful tales about the gods nor by dreadful sights or sounds from on high. He was encouraged to his daring deed not only by his loathing of religion or suffering from it but also by his desire for honor, for being the first: he wished to be the first to free himself from the common bondage or imprisonment. Thanks to the power of his mind he succeeded in breaking through the walls of the world and traversing in mind the boundless whole and in bringing back to "us" knowledge of what is possible and impossible: the gods as experienced in religion are impossible. Hence "we" no longer grovel upon the earth, but equal the highest (62–79).

Lucretius fears that Memmius might fear that, by acquiring the knowledge which is gained through rising against religion and which justifies that rising, he would commit a crime. His reply is simple: religion has caused crimes more frequently than irreligion. He gives a single example: Agamemnon sadly but pitilessly sacrificed his utterly terrified virgin daughter Iphigenia, his first-born child, in order to appease the virgin goddess Diana who would not otherwise permit the sailing of the Greek fleet against Troy (80–101). By reminding us of Diana's savage demand the poet justifies once more his turning toward Venus. Apart from this, his single example would appear to be neither sufficient nor the most appropriate, for the event with which he deals occurred in the remote past; it did not occur in Rome; and there is no reason to believe that the abolition of human sacrifice was due to philosophy. Provisionally one may reply that Lucretius chooses the Greek example since it was a Greek who liberated man from religion. He thus underlines the fact that Greekness is the link between Romanism and Epicureanism, or that after having turned to Venus, the ancestress of the Romans, the Roman must turn to Greeks, to men belonging to a foreign people now enslaved by Rome, in order to become free: it was a Greek who won the greatest of all victories, a victory surpassing all Roman victories.

Whatever may be true of the crimes caused by religion, its terrors seriously endanger Memmius' happiness. Lucretius is certain that religious fear will induce Memmius to try to turn his back on the truth even after he has listened to it, for he will be exposed to the fear-inspiring inventions of seers regarding everlasting punishments after death. Even "our" Ennius, the first Roman poet who won immortal fame, speaks—not without contradicting himself—of the pale and miserable shades in Acheron and says that the shade of Homer rose to him and "began" to shed bitter tears and to reveal to him the nature of things. The only way to liberate oneself from

such saddening and terrifying dreams is knowledge of the nature of the soul, of its mortality, and of how it comes that "we" seem to see and hear the dead as if they were still alive; therefore man also needs knowledge of all things above and below (102–135). It would seem that Memmius is threatened less by fear of the gods than by fear of what might happen to him after death; one is led to wonder whether the fear of what might happen to men after death may not be independent of the fear of gods or even precede it. By referring to Ennius, Lucretius does not supply an example of Roman crimes caused by religion, unless one were to say that spreading terrifying tales is a crime. Besides, however much Lucretius disapproves of the dangerous falsehoods propagated by Ennius, he admires that poet: well-executed fables as such, even if they serve the untruth, are praiseworthy (cf. II 644). It is more immediately important to note that the first great Roman poet traced his knowledge of the nature of things to the first of the Greek poets: in turning to Greek wisdom Lucretius follows a most respectable Roman precedent. The opening of the poem is not the place to speak proudly, not to say to boast, of the poet's innovation or originality (cf. I 922–934, V 335–337).

Lucretius is to some extent an imitator of Ennius: he will transmit the obscure findings of the Greeks to the Romans in a poem. He is aware of the difficulty of his task—a difficulty due to the poverty of his native tongue and the novelty of the matter. He is induced to undergo the labor by the worth of Memmius and the prospect of friendship with him: friendship in the true sense requires that the friends think alike about the weightiest things. The poetic presentation serves the purpose of enlightening Memmius so that he can grasp thoroughly what otherwise would remain deeply hidden (136–145).

The findings of the Greeks are obscure only for those who have not grasped them, who therefore live in darkness and are gripped by fear of what might happen to them after death. That darkness and terror cannot be dispelled by Venus or anything else resembling her or akin to her and in particular not by poetry as such, but only by nature coming to sight and being penetrated (146–148).

Lucretius leads Memmius from Rome via Venus to the victorious Greek. In the remote past the Greeks defeated and destroyed Troy, protected by Venus, through religion, that is, the sacrifice of Iphigenia; this victory led to the founding of Rome, which defeated Greece, but did not altogether destroy it. At their peak some Greeks won through philosophy the most glorious victory possible.

The opening of the poem leads from Venus, the joy of gods and men, to the promise of the true joy which comes from the understanding of nature. The poem itself is meant to fulfill that promise. Let us turn at once to its ending in order to see how the promise has been fulfilled.

2. *The Ending* (VI 1138–1286)

The last Book of the poem is the only one that begins and ends with "Athens." It almost goes without saying that no Book begins and ends with "Rome." The beginning of the last Book shows Athens' greatness, and the end shows Athens' misery. Athens of outstanding fame first gave men corn, an elevated kind of life, and laws; she first gave men sweet solace of life when she brought forth the highly gifted man who by teaching wisdom and thus liberating men from anguish showed them the way to happiness. This praise of Athens must be read in the light of the beginning of the preceding Book. There Lucretius has spoken of the story that Ceres has taught men how to grow corn and of the fact that the god Epicurus has taught men how to become wise. By correcting himself in the parallel passage the poet shows that he can, if with some difficulty, resist the temptation to deify the greatest benefactor of the human race, the most venerable among the departed.[2] He is grateful, not to any god, but in the first place to Athens and to no other city.

The last Book ends with a description of the plague which had struck Athens and which had been rendered immortal by Thucydides. This is not the ending which one would have expected, the happy ending. The poet had promised a copious speech on the gods (V 155), a speech which would have made a happy ending. For some reason he replaced the speech on the gods, the only beings that are perfectly happy, by the description of extreme misery.

Lucretius' description of the plague differs most strikingly from its Thucydidean model in being completely silent about the fact that the plague occurred during a war and even owed its extremely destructive character to that war: [3] the plague was altogether a natural phenomenon, the work of nature. As a consequence the plague as presented by Lucretius is not less but more terrible than it is according to Thucydides. Since Lucretius does not present the plague in its context—in what we would call its "historical" context—since he does not present the events preceding it and following it, but describes it in isolation at the end of his poem, he presents it as if it were the end of the world; he is silent on the cessation of the plague. He presents to his readers in fact a recorded experience which could give them a notion of the unrecordable end of the world. He is less explicit than Thucydides about the fact that there were many who survived the plague.[4] He dwells more than Thucydides does on the fear of death which gripped those exposed to the plague—their fear of death, not of what might happen to them after death—and he is silent about their (not necessarily unsuccessful) attempts, emphasized by Thucydides, to snatch some pleasures without any regard to law before it was too late.[5] He does follow Thucydides' description of the breakdown of fear of the gods and of

respect for the sacred laws regarding burial. Yet this description takes on a somewhat different meaning in the Lucretian context; one cannot say of Thucydides' work what one can say of Lucretius' work: that its most important purpose is to liberate men from religion.

In order to reveal the magnitude of his enterprise, the poet returns at the end of his poem for a moment to a still more pre-Epicurean view than the one from which he started. He says that those who, from too great a desire for life and fear of death, failed to take care of their sick were punished afterward with a shameful death since they themselves were neglected and left without help when they fell sick; although he does not speak of divine punishment, he suggests it. Yet he corrects himself immediately thereafter: those who from a sense of shame did take care of their sick died no less miserably than the shameless.[6] As a consequence of the misery everywhere, neither the rites thought to be of divine origin nor the gods themselves counted for much: they did not count for nothing. For while the Athenians disregarded the customs of burial which they had always observed, they did not desert the bodies of their dead kinsmen.[7] At any rate, the breakdown of religion is presented by Lucretius, as it is by Thucydides, as a sign of extreme misery: there is something worse, much worse, than religion.[8] In the Lucretian context this means that the plague which occurred in the heyday of Athenian civilization was more terrible than the sacrifice of Iphigenia which occurred far from Athens in the obscure past: the witnesses of Iphigenia's slaughter were sad and terrified; they were not in a state of utter despondency; they could hope that Diana would be appeased, and to the best of their knowledge this hope was fulfilled. And while the story of Iphigenia's sacrifice may or may not be true, the truth of the account of the plague in Athens is vouched for by one of the most sober observers that ever was—by a man who was singularly free from religious fear. The fact that Thucydides observed and described the plague which struck him down could seem to show that philosophy, the study of nature, is possible under the most unfavorable circumstances. Lucretius' description of the plague, however, taken by itself, is far from suggesting this. It rather suggests that the mind of the philosopher stricken by the plague would lose all its powers, become filled with anguish, pain, and fear, and disintegrate before he died.[9] The plague occurred prior to Epicurus' birth, but Lucretius does not in the slightest degree suggest that Epicurus or an Epicurean would have withstood it better than anybody else.

By contrasting directly the opening of the poem with its ending we gain the impression that the poem moves from the sweetest natural phenomenon to the saddest and ugliest or that at the beginning the poet abstracts entirely from the evils in order to accumulate them at the end. At the beginning he praises Venus, the giver of joy, charm, and peace, as the ruler of nature; at the end he speaks, not even of Mars, but of the plague. Near the

beginning he speaks of the sacrifice of Iphigenia which was demanded by Diana and appeared to appease that goddess. At the end he speaks of the plague which could be thought to have been sent by Apollo, but the stark terror of which is not relieved by any hope that one could appease the god who might have sent it. The poem appears to move from beautiful or comforting falsehoods to the repulsive truth. There is undoubtedly a certain falsehood implied in the isolation of the plague: the plague is as much a work of nature as procreation, but not more than the latter. The plague is as much the work of nature as the golden deeds of Venus, nay, as the understanding of nature. It is doubtful whether philosophy has any remedy against the helplessness and the debasement which afflicts anyone struck by such events as the plague. By revealing fully the nature of things, philosophy proves to be not simply a "sweet solace" (V 21). Nevertheless, the movement from Venus to nature, which is destructive as it is creative, is an ascent.

3. *The Function of Lucretius' Poetry (I 926–950 and IV 1–25)*

The movement from the untruth to the truth is not simply a movement from unrelieved darkness and terror to pure light and joy. On the contrary, the truth appears at first to be repulsive and depressing. A special effort is needed to counteract the first appearance of the truth. This special effort is beyond the power of philosophy; it is the proper work of poetry. The poet Lucretius follows the philosopher Epicurus; he imitates him; he belongs as it were to a weaker and lower species than the teacher of the naked truth.[10] Yet precisely for this reason the poet can do something which the philosopher cannot do.

Lucretius' poetry makes bright and sweet the obscure and sad findings of the Greeks, that is, of the philosophers.[11] The contrast between the sweetest and most exhilarating celebrated at the beginning of his poem and the saddest and most depressing described at its end—a contrast which we understand as indicative of the movement the reader must undergo—is the most striking example of the character of Lucretius' poetry.

Lucretius speaks of the character of his poetry most clearly in twenty-five verses which occur first immediately before his exposition of infinity and which are repeated with very minor changes at the beginning of Book IV, the Book devoted to what we may call the acts of the soul or the mind. His subject, we learn, is dark, but his poem is bright. The doctrine which he sets forth seems often to be rather sad to those not initiated into it, and the multitude shrinks from it with horror. Therefore he sets it forth in a sweet poem, giving the doctrine as it were a touch of the sweet honey of the Muses. In so doing he acts like a physician who attempts to give children repulsive wormwood to drink and first touches the rim of the cup with sweet honey; thus the unsuspecting children are deceived for their

benefit and do not sense the bitterness of the drink which heals them.

The potential Epicurean whom Lucretius addresses may be a man of rare worth according to ordinary standards, and he may have an excellent mind; in the most important respect he is, to begin with, quite immature. Therefore the poet must deceive him by adding something to the doctrine which he expounds, something which is alien to the doctrine and which is meant to conceal the sad, repulsive, and horrible character of the doctrine. The comparison of honey and wormwood on the one hand with the poetry and the doctrine on the other does not hold in every respect: children do not necessarily learn that it was the bitter medicine which cured them, whereas those readers of Lucretius' work who grasp its meaning necessarily learn that it is the doctrine which makes them sound and happy. The comparison surely holds in that in both cases the patient tastes the sweet first: thanks to the poetry, what the reader tastes first is sweet. But does the reader ever taste the repulsive? Is what is primarily repulsive, if tasted by itself, noticed only after it is no longer repulsive? Will its taste eventually even be sweet? The example of Venus at the beginning and of the plague at the end would seem to show that whereas the sweet is sensed first, the repulsive or sad is sensed even at the end, but in such a way that it is more bearable for the sensitive reader after he has digested the doctrine than before. Furthermore, the child may take the honeyed wormwood merely for the sake of the honey, or he may take it because he is uncomfortable; he surely is not so uncomfortable as to be willing to take the bitter potion by itself. Similarly, the potential Epicurean may be attracted to the Epicurean doctrine only because of the sweetness of Lucretius' poetry, or he may be attracted by it because he suffers from the terrors of religion; surely those terrors are not so great as to make him willing to swallow the naked truth. After all, he does not live in the age in which Agamemnon sacrificed his beloved daughter. We conclude that poetry is the link or the mediation between religion and philosophy.

How can religion be more attractive than philosophy if religion is nothing but terrifying? To answer this question, one must reconsider what the poet says at the beginning in the light of what he says later on how men lived before the emergence of philosophy; one must consider the function of religion. Originally men lived like wild beasts, depending entirely on the spontaneous gifts of the earth, without fire and the arts as well as without laws and language, unable to conceive of a common good. They feared death because they clung to the sweet light of life, but apparently not because they feared what might happen to them after death. Nor did they fear that the sun might not rise again after it had set; the thought that sun and earth might be destructible had not occurred to them.[12] That thought occurred to them only after they had acquired language and the arts and established society and laws; then they began to doubt whether the sun would always rise and set and whether the earth would last forever:

whether the world would come to an end and hence whether it did not have a beginning. There is only one protection against the fear that the walls of the world will someday crumble: the will of gods. Religion thus serves as a refuge from the fear of the end or the death of the world; it has its root in man's attachment to the world. Lucretius himself wishes, not to say prays, that the day on which the huge machine of the world will fall down with a dreadful sound will not come soon. The world to which man is attached is not the boundless whole but the visible whole—heaven and earth and what belongs to them—which is only an infinitesimal part of the boundless whole: there are infinitely many worlds both simultaneously and successively; everything to which a man can be attached—his life, his friends, his fatherland, his fame, his work—implies attachment to the world to which he belongs and which makes possible the primary objects of his attachment.[13] The recourse to the gods of religion and the fear of them is already a remedy for a more fundamental pain: the pain stemming from the divination that the lovable is not sempiternal or that the sempiternal is not lovable. Philosophy transforms the divination into a certainty. One may therefore say that philosophy is productive of the deepest pain. Man has to choose between peace of mind deriving from a pleasing delusion and peace of mind deriving from the unpleasing truth. Philosophy which, anticipating the collapse of the walls of the world, breaks through the walls of the world, abandons the attachment to the world; this abandonment is most painful. Poetry on the other hand is, like religion, rooted in that attachment, but unlike religion, it can be put into the service of detachment. Because poetry is rooted in the prephilosophic attachment, because it enhances and deepens that attachment, the philosophic poet is the perfect mediator between the attachment to the world and the attachment to detachment from the world. The joy or pleasure which Lucretius' poem arouses is therefore austere, reminding of the pleasure aroused by the work of Thucydides.[14]

II. On the First Book

In giving an account of things "we" refer them to the first bodies (I 59). The first bodies are not immediately known; they become known only through an ascent (or descent). Prior to the ascent people render an account of things, or at least of many things, by tracing them to gods. What we have indicated regarding the first stage of the ascent can be stated in general terms as follows. Primarily men are under the spell of ancestral opinion; they act on the assumption that the true and the good is the ancestral. A flexible man who by traveling has become aware of the thought of many peoples will have become doubtful of the equation of the true and good with the ancestral. Yet since all peoples trace at least some

things to gods, he will still believe in active gods. The second stage of the ascent consists then in an insight which cannot be acquired by traveling, but only while sitting or standing still; it is the realization that activity is incompatible with the bliss of gods. For some reason Lucretius does not use this theological insight at the beginning of his exposition of the truth.

Lucretius opens his account of nature with the assertion that nothing ever comes into being out of nothing through gods. He thus opposes the opinion of "all mortals" who trace to gods the numerous happenings of which they cannot see the causes. He does not establish the principle that nothing happens without a cause; all men take that principle for granted as they take it for granted that there are things. The question concerns exclusively the causality of gods, or, more precisely, the question is exclusively whether one is entitled to identify the invisible causes with the gods. To refute the opinion primarily held by all mortals, he will show that nothing ever comes into being out of nothing; by showing this he shows that nothing ever comes into being out of nothing through gods. He seems to dismiss without argument the possibility that the gods create things from something: is coming into being through gods the same as coming into being through nothing? He cannot be said to presuppose the true view of the gods according to which activity is incompatible with their bliss, for, as we have seen, the verses in the proem (44–49) which intimate this view do not in their context exclude the possibility that the self-sufficient gods bestow their favors from kindness or whim, without any effort, as it were playfully, on beings which are not self-sufficient. Lucretius says that when we have seen that nothing can be created out of nothing, we shall understand whence each thing can be created and how all things come to be without the labor of gods: he will prove that all things come into being from something in such a way that there is no room for any divine activity or interference (149–158); this proof makes unnecessary the inference from the gods' bliss; it makes unnecessary the assertion of the gods' bliss.

Lucretius establishes the view that nothing can come into being out of nothing as follows. If things could come into being out of nothing, they could *a fortiori* come into being out of anything: things of every kind could come into being out of things of every other kind; at any season, suddenly, they could be born full-grown; their coming into being would not require the fulfillment of any specific conditions; the various kinds of things would not have peculiar sizes and powers; human art would not have any rhyme or reason. As it is, however, it is manifest that things come into being from fixed seeds and the like; hence, they cannot come into being out of nothing (159–214). Lucretius achieves the transition from "they do not" to "they cannot" by starting from this disjunction: things come into being either from nothing (or anything) or else from fixed seeds; but they come into being only from fixed seeds; hence they cannot come into being from nothing. One could say that his argument is defective because

he gives only a few examples; he would probably ask the objector to produce a single example of coming into being out of nothing or even of metamorphoses which are not natural processes, for such metamorphoses would be in the decisive respect emergences out of nothing. Still, his selection of examples is in need of an explanation.

All examples adduced by him in support of the six arguments which are meant to prove that nothing comes into being out of nothing are taken from animals and plants. In the fifth argument he uses as sole example the size and power of men; he could as well have chosen the size and power of lions, cows, or mice; he chooses man in order to prepare the transition from natural beings [15] to art. But why does he limit his choice in the whole passage to living beings (animals and plants)? [16] Let us consider the context or rather the immediate sequel. After having proved that nothing comes into being out of nothing, he proves in four arguments that nothing perishes into nothing (215–264); the examples by which he supports these arguments are taken from animate and inanimate things (such as earth and sea) alike. Furthermore, he now speaks of Venus as well as of Father Ether and Mother Earth; no reference of this kind had occurred in his speech about coming into being. Finally, the second half of the fundamental reasoning is adorned by the sketch of a pleasing rural spectacle, a sketch which fills one-third of the fourth argument; there is no parallel to this in the first half. We suggest this explanation. In the first half Lucretius deals with birth, and in the second he deals with death. Birth is more pleasing, more beautiful, than death. One way of mitigating or concealing the repulsive is by generalization: inanimate things perish, but do not die. The poet speaks of Venus in that argument in which he speaks of what time removes through old age and what is brought back in a manner by Venus: Venus compensates and comforts for death; it is indeed no longer possible to speak of Venus as the sole ruler of the nature of things (21). The poet speaks of Father Ether and Mother Earth, and he draws a pleasing picture in the argument in which he speaks of the consequences of a certain "passing away," namely, the passing away of rain; these consequences are altogether exhilarating: a rich vegetation which nourishes the animals and which renders possible the generation of offspring and the healthy growth of the young animals. Death—be it only the death of rain—loses its sting if it is seen to lead to life or to the only possible eternity. We have not yet learned that there will be an end of the cycle of births and deaths on our earth. At any rate, in presenting his fundamental reasoning Lucretius follows the rule that the sweet must precede the sad and that the sad must be sweetened.

Lucretius fears that his addressee or reader might "begin" to distrust what he is told since the causes to which he is led (the eternal and indestructible first bodies) are invisible; his teacher reminds him therefore of invisible bodies of which he cannot help admitting that they are. His first

example is the unseen bodies of wind; he describes their devastating power and compares it to the devastating power that the soft nature of water acquires through abundance of rain (265–297); he speaks of the devastating effect of rain only after having spoken of its exhilarating effect; and when speaking of the devastating effect of storms or floods he does not mention explicitly their destroying animals in general and men in particular. Only one argument in this section deals exclusively and explicitly with the disappearance of invisible bodies, that is, with destruction; this argument is supported only by examples taken from inanimate things and chiefly from artifacts (305–321). The last argument in this section deals with both growth and decay; the only example mentioned here is the decay of rocks (322–328).

Lucretius next turns to proving the being of the void, that is, of the only kind of nothing that is. The speech about the void does not seem to require any sweetening, although, as we learn later, the void belongs to the "steep" things (658–659). If one compares the central argument establishing the being of the void with its repetition in the last Book (I 348–355, VI 942–955), one sees that in the first statement there is no explicit mention of the void in man, whereas in the second statement the void in man is emphasized; the second statement is directly linked to the description of the plague. Although the doctrine of the void does not need sweetening, it will not be accepted by Memmius without a special effort on the part of both the pupil and the master. The section on the void is the first in which the poet engages in explicit polemics against "some" (371; cf. 391), and it is the first in which he addresses Memmius by name; he also uses there the second person singular with greater frequency than at any time since he began to address him. In concluding his reasoning regarding the being of the void, Lucretius indicates that he is not sure that he has convinced Memmius. He urges him to discover additional arguments on the basis of the poet's slight suggestions. Yet Memmius may be ever so little slack. In that case will he remain exposed to the terrors of religion? This is not what the poet says: one can overcome the terrors of religion without asserting the void. Considering the fact that the fundamental reasoning which, without being theological, leaves no room for divine action is not specifically Epicurean, we may say that according to Lucretius one can overcome the terrors of religion without being an Epicurean; it is sufficient for this purpose to become a *physiologos* in general. Lucretius does not threaten Memmius with anything should he be slack; if he is, Lucretius promises that he will hear further arguments from the poet till the end of their lives. Or could one call this promise a threat? It is hard to know which alternative Memmius is likely to choose. When encouraging him to discover additional arguments, Lucretius compares Memmius' ability to draw the truth from its hiding places to the ability of dogs to find the lair of a wild beast that ranges the mountains (402–411); this comparison is

the second occurring in the poem, the first being the comparison of devastating storms to devastating floods (280–290).

There is no nature, nothing self-subsisting, apart from bodies and the void; for whatever is by itself must either be susceptible of being sensed by "the common sense" (or, perhaps more precisely, it must touch and be touched), and then it is body, or it cannot be touched, and then it is the void; or, whatever is by itself is either able to act and to be acted upon, and then it is body, or it is that within which or through which acting and being acted upon take place, and then it is the void (418–448). What is, but is not by itself, is either the property of a body or the void, that is, cannot be separated from the body in question or the void without the body in question or the void being destroyed, or it is an accident of body or of the void. Among the examples of properties which Lucretius gives there is none that is peculiar to man and even to living beings; but the examples which he gives of accidents are all peculiar to men: "the human things" are all accidents. He mentions slavery and freedom, poverty and wealth, war and peace. He does not mention life, for it is a property of living beings. He throws no light on the status of death. Regarding time, he makes clear that it is not self-subsisting. Past events—his examples are Paris' desire for Helen, the rape of Helen, the Greeks' nocturnal conquest of Troy with the help of the wooden horse, and their destruction of Troy—were accidents of the human beings in question; they are now as little as those human beings themselves are (449–482). The poem opens with a presentation of Venus as the life-giving goddess who bends Mars to her will. The present examples correct that presentation. Paris was the favorite of Venus then, just as Memmius is her favorite now. Paris brought about the ruin of his city or the victory of the Greeks; Memmius is to contribute to the victory of Greek wisdom in Rome. Could Lucretius' poem be comparable to the Trojan horse? This much is certain: the whole dimension of things Greek and Roman qua Greek and Roman is a small part of the sphere of accidents. We are at the opposite pole of the thought, stated in the proem, that the Romans and only the Romans are akin to that deity who is the only guide of the nature of things.

Lucretius proceeds to show that the first bodies whose character he has left hitherto undetermined are atoms. They are absolutely solid, that is, they do not include any void, and hence are eternal and indestructible, whereas all other bodies are perishable: everything we see is more quickly destroyed than built up, as the poet here observes in passing (556–557). The atoms are indivisible; the fact that there is a limit to the division of bodies is at the bottom of every finiteness and fixedness such as the specific limitations of the growth and the life span of the various kinds of living beings and of what each kind can and cannot do by virtue of the "covenants" or "laws" of nature (551–598). Finiteness is meant to be a source of comfort.[17] In accordance with this Lucretius does not yet make clear

that the visible world as a whole is perishable; he only alludes to it (502); he rather seems to suggest the eternity of the species (584–598) and hence of the visible world. No atoms, no species. The poet speaks therefore in this section of "nature creating things" or of "matter which generates" (629, 632–633) as distinguished not only from Venus (277–278) but also from nature as both creative and destructive (56–57). While the atoms are indivisible, they consist of parts, but these parts cannot be separated from one another (599–634).

The teachings regarding the void and the atoms are the first teachings presented by Lucretius which are not accepted by all students of nature. When speaking of the void he indicates that Memmius might be impressed by the fictions of those who deny the void (370–376, 391, 398–399). Such indications are almost completely avoided in the verses dealing with the atoms (624). Lucretius does not speak explicitly of possible objections of the addressee to the doctrine of atoms because he turns to alternatives to atomism after having stated the atomistic doctrine; in the latter context he voices the objections of the addressee in a more emphatic form than he has voiced his previous objections, hesitations, or misgivings: he makes Memmius voice them.[18]

The alternatives to atomism which Lucretius regards as worthy of consideration are these: the first bodies are (1) one or two of the four elements, (2) the four elements (Empedocles), and (3) the homoeomeria of Anaxagoras. The most famous upholder of the first alternative is Heraclitus, who taught that fire is the matter of things. His fame is bright among the empty or lightheaded of the Greeks—*inanes a negando inane* (658)—as distinguished from the weighty or ponderous ones who seek the truth. The reason is not that fire tends upward,[19] but that Heraclitus' language is dark; fools admire and love particularly those things which they can see hidden beneath words turned upside down, and they set up for true what can prettily tickle the ears and is adorned with the help of make-up supplied by charming sounds (635–644). Lucretius does not say that Heraclitus spoke obscurely in order to be admired and loved by fools; nor does he deny that Heraclitus' words sound well; Lucretius himself is eager to charm the reader with his language so as to enable him to understand an obscure teaching.[20] Did then Heraclitus employ the charm of his language in order to prevent the understanding of an obscure teaching? The Epicureans surely were proud of their outspokenness.[21] At any rate, Lucretius' bark is somewhat worse than his bite; he must counteract Heraclitus' renown.

After he has concluded his attack on Heraclitus, he chants the praise of Empedocles, whom he regards as superior to all other deniers of the atoms and the void; Empedocles' teaching is indeed not according to nature, but it surely is in accordance with the nature of his native Sicily.[22] Thereafter Lucretius makes it clear that those to whom he has referred before mentioning Empedocles—among them Heraclitus is the only one whom he has

mentioned by name—were great men since they found many things divinely, in a more holy manner, and by a much more certain reasoning than Apollo's Pythia ever does (734–739). In accordance with this he does not criticize Heraclitus, Empedocles, and Anaxagoras on the ground that their doctrines support or do not destroy the terrors of religion. To wonder how this can be reconciled with what we know through the fragments especially of Empedocles means to wonder how Lucretius read Empedocles, but one cannot begin to study how Lucretius read Empedocles before one knows how Lucretius wrote. We have seen earlier that according to Lucretius one can overcome the terrors of religion without becoming an Epicurean. Perhaps his amazing silence about Plato and Aristotle (as distinguished from Heraclitus, Empedocles, and Anaxagoras) signifies that they are not helpful in the fight against religion.

The central argument of Lucretius against all nonatomists is this: all things which we perceive are changeable and hence perishable bodies; hence the indestructible first bodies cannot be perceptible; but the four elements (fire, earth, water, air) and the characteristics of the homoeomeria (bones, flesh, blood, gold, earth, fire, water, and so on) are perceptible. In other words, the first bodies must have a different nature from that of "the things"; they must have a secret and unseen nature; only if the nature of the first things differs from that of "the things" can the character of "the things" as changeable and perishable be preserved.[23] There remains the difficulty not discussed by Lucretius that size and shape—characters of both the atoms and the things—are as such sensible and hence destructible. Be this as it may, Lucretius does not say that the alternatives to atomism must be rejected because they favor religion and its terrors; his objection to them is purely theoretical; but by making Memmius defend them in direct speech,[24] the poet presents him as making a last-ditch stand in defense of the ultimate dignity of "the things," "the world," "the walls of the world," after he has failed to rise in defense of Romanism. But Memmius succumbs to Lucretius' powerful assault.

This is the situation in which the poet, taking breath, speaks about his art and its function by comparing himself to a physician who has to give a bitter potion to children and deceives them for their benefit by sweetening the repulsive drink. He speaks about what he is doing after he has been doing it, and after the reader has been exposed to it, for a considerable time. The critique of the nonatomistic doctrines has in fact shown that atomism is the most bitter or sad of all doctrines; the completion of that critique is therefore a kind of climax, surely a place for rest and reflection. The poet introduces the verses which deal with his art and its function by proudly proclaiming the novelty of his undertaking: he is the first to write a poem openly devoted to the liberation of the mind from the bonds of religion, and he wishes to be the first; he is spurred by a great hope of praise; he goes so far as to say that that great hope has made him love the

Muses (922–925). Originally (140–141) he has said that he is spurred by his hope for Memmius' friendship. But originally he has spoken only of the exhilarating character of his undertaking and has been silent about its saddening character. As he discloses the true character of the true doctrine, he discloses his true motive: if the true doctrine were simply gratifying, his love of Memmius would be a sufficient motive for writing the poem; but since it is not simply gratifying, it is not certain that Memmius or any other man known to the poet will be gratified by it; he can reasonably hope only for praise, that is, for praise by indeterminate readers.

In other words, however sad the truth may be, to be the first discoverer of the sad truth is not sad, for to be the first to achieve a great victory, a victory of a new kind, is worthy of praise, and praise is gratifying. The Greek who was the first to vanquish religion also wished to be the first to win that victory (71 ff.). However sad the truth may be, to be the first who speaks about the sad truth in charming verses is not sad. Since the poet makes bright the dark discoveries of the Greeks (136–145), the fame for which he longs may even be brighter than the fame of that Greek. He surely possesses an art which his master lacked. This art presupposes a deep understanding of the feelings which obstruct the acceptance of the true doctrine by most men—an understanding which the master did not necessarily possess. Hence in a respect which is not unimportant, the pupil may be wiser than the master; he may not be the master's pupil in every respect. Therefore we should not expect Lucretius to follow his master or his school in every point. Was there ever a pupil, wise or foolish, who in fact agreed with his master in every point?

The passage under discussion is less a conclusion to what precedes it than an introduction to what follows it (921). What follows requires a keener listening, a higher degree of understanding, of ability to overcome one's attachments, of the addressee's co-operation with the poet,[25] than what precedes. What follows is the proof that the whole is infinite; it is infinite in extent, and there are infinitely many atoms. Finiteness is comforting; infinity is terrifying. Yet without infinity there cannot be "things," that is, finiteness. There cannot be a world without limits, without walls; yet the walls owe their stability which is precarious to the infinity beyond them; in the last resort we live in "an unwalled city." The comparison of the true doctrine to wormwood is a fit introduction to the section on infinity. After having shown that space is infinite, Lucretius argues as follows. In infinite space there must be infinitely many atoms or else there will be no compulsion for the atoms to come together for the formation of finite things, for the atoms, being mindless or blind, cannot intend to come together;[26] nor are the atoms attracted by one another; they are brought together and kept together only by colliding with one another, by buffeting one another; since by themselves they are in constant motion, only a limitless supply of atoms can keep the world, or the worlds, in being, partly by

inflicting blows on the worlds from outside. The examples which Lucretius gives of the things that are created by the mindless meeting of the mindless atoms and that could not last for ever so short a time if the atoms were not replaced constantly from without are the sea, the earth, the sky, the race of mortals, and the sacred bodies of the gods (1014–1016). The gods are then not strictly speaking self-sufficient. The context (1019–1020, 1027–1031) suggests that the gods have come into being like all things other than the atoms and the void. The gods being created by the atoms in the same manner as the world (heaven and earth and what belongs to them) or the worlds, one cannot resort to the gods for assurance that the world is everlasting. It is perhaps more important to note that Lucretius still fails to make clear that the human race or the world will not last forever; since he mentions the human race together not only with heaven and earth but with the gods as well, he would have seemed to deny the imperishability of the gods by asserting the perishability of the world. This is to say nothing of the fact that if the worlds are perishable, it is hard to see how the *intermundia*—the places where the gods are asserted to live in eternal security—can be imperishable.

Lucretius does not fear that these or similar implications might induce Memmius to rebel against the doctrine of infinity. He fears that Memmius, whom he now addresses by name for the second time,[27] might be attracted by the view of "some" according to which the stability of the world is brought about, not by any blows by atoms from the outside, but by the desire of everything for the center of the world. There cannot be a center of the world, that is, of the universe, if the universe is infinite (1052–1082). What makes this view attractive would seem to be the *horror infiniti* or, perhaps more precisely, man's need for regarding himself and his world as the center of the universe. In trying to reduce that view *ad absurdum*, Lucretius points out that, as a consequence of its implications, the whole world would perish, that is, nothing would remain but space and the atoms (1083–1113): he does not say here that this is the inevitable fate of the world precisely on the basis of Epicureanism; he does not say here that the gate of death is not shut on the world.[28]

III. On Book II

The First Book opens with the praise of Venus as both the ancestress of the Romans and the sole guide of the nature of things; the Second Book opens with a praise of that life of man as man which is in accordance with nature. Nature calls for nothing but that the body be free from pain and that the mind, freed from care and fear, enjoy pleasure. Bodily nature can be gratified at little cost; it does not require luxury, wealth, noble birth, or regal power. Nor are things of this kind needed or useful for the well-being

of the mind. What the mind needs is freedom from the terrors of religion and from fear of death—evils which are removed, not by political and military power,[29] but only by reason; reason alone, the study of nature, can give man tranquillity of mind (14–61). Nature and the study of nature are the sole sources of happiness.

In the first thirteen verses Lucretius speaks of a great boon about which he is silent in the rest of the proem; we must not forget that gratification while listening to his description of human happiness. It is sweet or gratifying, he says, to behold others in the grip of evils from which oneself is free. He gives three examples: the man on land who sees another struggling in the wind-tossed sea, the man in safety who watches armies in battle, and the pupil of wise men who from his heights looks down on the unwise struggling for superiority with one another. Of these spectacles the last is the most gratifying; in fact it is second to nothing else in sweetness. Lucretius does not speak of a man in bodily health who sees others suffering from disease. He says that it is not the distress of others which is pleasant, but only the beholding of evils from which one is free. Yet he does not speak of evils from which oneself has suffered before, for one cannot strictly speaking behold those evils; hence one must admit that our pleasure or happiness is enhanced by our seeing the pains and dangers of others. The sad is necessary as a foil for the sweet, for sensing the sweet. Does the gods' supreme happiness—their complete freedom from pain and danger (I 47)—require that they behold the misery of men? Is it desirable or even possible that all men should be happy, that is, philosophers? We have seen how much Lucretius is concerned with receiving praise for being the first, with superiority: his happiness requires the inferiority of others. We cannot say whether he regards this kind of pleasure as natural, for he speaks of nature only afterward (II 17, 20, 23). Certainly nature will not be the source of happiness if it is not also the source of unhappiness. Man's happiness requires that he be free from "the blind night" in which he finds himself prior to philosophy; yet philosophy discovers the roots of all things in empty space and the "blind" atoms (I 1110, 1115–1116).[30] Nothing is more alien to wisdom than that with which wisdom is above everything else concerned: the atoms and the void. The first things are in no way a model for man.

Lucretius turns at once to the questions concerning the movement by which the atoms generate the various things and dissolve them again, concerning the force which compels them to do this, and concerning the speed with which they move in the void. He asks for the reader's attention in a commanding tone. That the atoms are in motion is shown by the fact that "we" see that "all" things decay and disappear and other things of the same kind take their place (II 62–79). Lucretius obviously thinks, not of the sun and the species of animals, but of individual animals and nations. While he now mentions destruction first, he sees it only as a stage in the

cycle through which "the sum of things [the present world] always renews itself." [31] Nor does he mention death. He goes on to show how the atoms, moving in the boundless void, never come to rest, how some of them colliding with one another either bounce back or unite with one another, how by uniting in different ways they produce different kinds of things. He illustrates the process by an explicit likeness and image: the movement of minute bodies in the sun's rays when those rays enter a dark room; those bodies mingle in many ways and, as it were having formed troops, engage in everlasting battle. It goes without saying that the atoms' clashes do not take place in the light of the sun; the likeness sweetens the likened. The clashes of the atoms are fights in the dark, blind fights of blind atoms, blind blows which the blind atoms inflict on one another (80–141). The fundamental movements resemble less the deeds of Venus than those of Mars.[32] We see once more how one-sided, how misleading is the invocation of Venus at the beginning of the work despite or because of its necessity. We also see how appropriate it is that the central example at the beginning of Book II is a man not engaged in fighting who watches fighting.

Lucretius underlines the importance of his general characterization of the atomic movements by what he does immediately afterward. Both near the beginning of the next section (142–183) and near its end he addresses Memmius by name. He has addressed him by name twice in Book I (411, 1052). The section thus distinguished consists of two parts. The first part is devoted to the speed with which the atoms move in the void. How great that speed is one can gather by considering the speed with which the light of the sun travels; since it does not travel in the void, the speed of the atomic motions must be much, much greater than the speed of the light of the sun. The poet stresses the contrast between the movement of the sun's light and that of the atoms by alluding to the birds' celebration of sunrise. It is reasonable to think that it is the enormous speed with which the atoms travel that accounts for the full fury and violence of their clashes; it is then that fury and violence which contributes to, or rather accounts for, the emergence of the "things." According to the diametrically opposite view the world is the work of the greatest awakeness, circumspection, and care. It is this view against which Lucretius turns in the second part of the section. According to "some," [33] we are told, only beings of superhuman wisdom and power, only gods, can have formed the world out of matter, atomic or nonatomic: only through the activity of gods can the world possess that perfect harmony with the needs of man which it is seen to possess; only in this way can it be understood that nature prevents the death of the human race by inducing men through divine pleasure, through the deeds of Venus, to generate offspring—this wonderful harmony between the individual's sweetest pleasure and the most common good. Lucretius rejects this view as utterly false. The reason is not that he

is an Epicurean: even if he did not know what the origins of the things are, that is, if he did not know that they are the atoms and the void, he would dare to assert from the very manner of working of heaven as well as from many other things that the nature of the world is not created for our benefit by divine power; by nature the world abounds in defects (167–182). Not wise gods or gods of wisdom, not even Venus, are at the helm or are the originators; at the origin there is the fury and violence of the blind atoms' blind fights. There is a radical disharmony between the atomic movements and even the *rationes caeli* on the one hand and the *rationes humanae* or the *rationes vitae* on the other.[34] The theological view tries to establish a harmony between the *rationes caeli* and the *rationes humanae*; it wishes to be comforting. Lucretius fights religion less on account of its terrors and crimes than of the defective character of the world; he does not fight religion primarily because he holds Epicureanism and in particular Epicurean theology to be true. What the poet tacitly suggested at the beginning of his argument (see pages 85–86 above) he now says almost explicitly: there is no need for recourse to the fundamental theologoumenon in order to refute the theological account. It goes without saying that the realization of the badness of the world does not induce Lucretius for a moment to think of rebellion or conquest: misery is as necessary to human life as happiness.

Lucretius continues his account of the atomic movements by showing first that the atoms move downward and then that they swerve. The atoms are of different weight, but in the void they all fall with equal speed; they would never clash and thus bring about the emergence of compounds but for the fact that they spontaneously swerve a little at times and in places which are in no way fixed: the movement after the swerve does not in a fixed manner arise from the movement before it. Atoms are so little attractive that they do not even attract one another. The alternative to the swerve would be that everything is determined by fate, and this is incompatible with the freedom with which every living being on earth follows "the will of [its] mind," that is, where pleasure leads it, or originates motion (216–293). When Epicurus takes issue with the physicists who assert that everything is determined by fate or necessity, he says that the belief in fate is worse than the belief in the tale of the gods since fate is inexorable, whereas the gods of the tale are not.[35] Lucretius does not follow his master in this point. His statement on the swerve of the atoms does not read as if it were directed against any school of thought (cf. 225). He does not wish to present the Epicurean teaching as pleasing or comforting, as more pleasing and comforting than other teachings set forth by students of nature. The doctrine of the swerve as Lucretius presents it is not meant to bring the *rationes* of the atoms into harmony with the *rationes humanae*. A sign of this is that the "freedom" which he tries to vindicate by that doctrine is not peculiar to man, but is common to all animals.

The swerve of the atoms might cast doubt on the fixedness of the natural order. To dispel that doubt Lucretius asserts that while the atoms are always in motion, the universe is in a sense at rest. No atom comes into being or perishes, nor do the kinds of their movements change, hence also not the outcome of those movements, that is, the production of the things of various kinds. Lucretius is again silent about the destruction of the kinds of things or of the world. The fact that the whole is seen to be at rest while all its parts are in motion is strange. To remove that strangeness, Lucretius adduces two gratifying ("white" or "glimmering") examples: a herd of grazing sheep and their lambs running around on a faraway hill, and military units engaged in a war game—not in war proper—on a plain as seen from high mountains (299–332).

There are infinitely many things and infinitely many atoms. Yet the things are related to the atoms as the infinitely many words or combinations of words are to the small numbers of letters (cf. I 823–829): the infinitely many atoms fall into classes of which there are not infinitely many. Lucretius starts from the infinitely many natural things, both animate and inanimate, each of which differs in shape from the others of its kind. He speaks at the greatest length of animals, especially of the fact that a mother can tell its offspring from any other young animal of its kind and the offspring its mother, and still more especially of the sad spectacle of a cow vainly seeking its calf which has been slaughtered before the altars of the gods. He thus prepares the reader for the detailed discussion (in II 398 ff.) of the atomic causes of the painful things on the one hand and of the pleasant on the other. He infers from the infinite variety of shapes of things that there must be a great variety of shapes of atoms: uniformity is the outcome of purposeful action, of human production that is guided by a single model (because it is guided by a single end), rather than of nature (333–380). The variety of atomic shapes is shown in a more precise manner especially by the different ways in which different things affect us with pleasure or pain; pleasure and pain are due to the different shapes of atoms. Lucretius is thus led to exclaim that "touch, yea touch, o holy majesties of the gods, is the sense of body" (434–435). The reference here to the gods needs an explanation. The poet had spoken earlier (I 1015) of "the holy bodies of the gods" (cf. I 38). In the present context he mentions a deity by name. He speaks of the pleasant feelings which go with the discharge of the semen "born in the body" "through the generative acts of Venus"; he does not yet refer to a deity when speaking in the same context of feelings of pain (II 435–439). The reference to Venus barely reminds us of the praise of Venus as "the joy of men and gods" at the beginning of the poem; we are more than sufficiently prepared for any weakening of that praise (cf. 172–173). Can we still believe that the gods enjoy the deeds of Venus? Above all, only twenty-five verses later Lucretius speaks of the bitter or nauseous body of Neptune, that is, of sea water—of the body of a

god which can be dissolved into its ingredients even by human means (471–477). Certain it is that our awareness of the gods must be understood in the last analysis in terms of our sense of touch.

One cannot help wondering regarding the size and shape especially of those atoms which compose the bodies of the gods. We learn from Lucretius that the number of atomic shapes or forms is limited, that the sizes of the atoms keep within unchangeable and rather narrow bounds, and that therefore there cannot be atoms of gigantic, not to say boundless, size. Similarly, none of the things created by the clash of atoms can surpass others of those things infinitely in beauty and splendor.[36] What this means regarding the gods is obvious. On the other hand, as we hear again, there are infinitely many atoms of each form. This is compatible with the fact that there are many fewer individuals of some kinds of things than of others. Even if there were a terrestrial species of which there is only one individual, infinitely many atoms of the appropriate shapes would be needed so that that individual could be formed and preserved, given the fact that the atoms move in what the poet now calls that vast and faithless sea. In fact, the movement of the atoms in the infinite void is comparable to that of the parts of a wrecked ship in the sea: as little as those parts, which are small in number, could ever be put together again through being tossed hither and thither by the waves, so little could atoms of a finite number ever be brought together and kept together to form a thing (522–568). All the terrors of the ocean, which after all has limits, are as nothing compared with the terrors of the void. Infinity achieves what wise gods could not have achieved: the production of a world of very deficient goodness. In particular, the balance between birth and death is due to the war which the atoms carry on with one another from infinite time. This balance is least perfect in the case of man with whom wise gods would be especially concerned: man begins his life crying, and laments accompany him to his grave.[37]

Lucretius is still silent about the death of the world—about the death of the species as distinguished from the death of individuals. He goes on to speak about the atomic composition of the earth without drawing the obvious conclusion that, being a compound, the earth is bound to perish sooner or later. He starts from the facts that nothing whose nature is manifestly seen consists only of one kind of atom and that the larger the number of powers a thing possesses within itself, the larger the number of kinds of atoms of which it will consist. The earth possesses within itself the greatest variety of powers; it gives rise to water, fire, and vegetation and it sustains man as well as wild beasts. Hence the earth alone has been called the Great Mother of the gods, of the wild beasts, and of our body (581–599).[38] Lucretius draws our attention to beings whose nature is not manifestly seen and which may consist of one kind of atoms only; one wonders whether the gods are beings of that kind, although (or because) this would

imply that the gods are the least powerful beings in the universe. The sequel surely suggests that the earth has much greater powers, or at least a much larger number of powers, than the gods and that the gods are terrestrial beings. At any rate, the earth understood as a goddess seems to be the clearest case of a terrestrial animal species of which there is only one member (cf. 541–543).

Of all these questions Lucretius answers immediately and explicitly only one; he denies the divinity of the earth. He prefaces this denial with a rather detailed description of the terror-inspiring, savage, and exotic procession of the Great Mother. That procession had been described by the ancient and learned poets of the Greeks who explained the meaning of its various features. Lucretius mentions seven items. The central one is the fact that the Great Mother is called the Mother of Mount Ida and that she is given as companions Phrygian bands, because, "as they say," corn was first produced in that part of the earth. The Trojans, from whom the Romans are derived, were Phrygians (I 474), but the Romans owe their knowledge of the remarkable Phrygian cult in question to the Greeks. It is in accordance with this that Lucretius traces the growing of corn to Athens (VI 1–2). The second item conveys encouragement to parents regarding the education of their children; the fifth conveys a condemnation of, and severe threat to, people who have violated the majesty of the mother and have been found ungrateful to their parents.[39] The sixth item serves the purpose of filling with fear the ungrateful minds and the impious hearts of the multitude through the divine majesty of the goddess; the context leaves it in doubt whether this goal is achieved. Lucretius himself is doubtful regarding the last feature of the procession which he mentions; it may refer to the tale told of the salvation of the infant Jupiter from the danger that his father Saturnus might devour him, to the everlasting grief[40] of the Great Mother, or it may intimate the goddess' proclaiming that men should defend their fatherland (their paternal earth) and protect and adorn their parents (600–643). Lucretius bestows high praise, if not on the procession itself, at least on the thoughts which the Greek poets found in some of its features. Yet he rejects those thoughts as quite wrong. His reason is that the gods are free from all pain and danger and that they are wholly unconcerned with men, with their merits or crimes (644–651). We may add that if the gods are born, they also will die.

The reason stated by Lucretius had been stated by him in the same words near the beginning of the poem (I 44–49), but the second statement, despite its being literally identical with the first, has a different meaning from that of the first. In the first place, the second statement is much richer in meaning than the first by virtue of what we have learned from Lucretius in the meantime; above all, the first statement concludes the invocation of Venus and does not call into question the divinity of Venus, whereas the second statement concludes the speech on the Great

Mother and is meant to justify the denial of her divinity. Yet the fundamental theologoumenon is not the sole reason why Lucretius denies the divinity of the Great Mother, or, if you wish, that theologoumenon implies a verity which the poet has not yet made explicit. The fundamental theologoumenon articulates the perfection, the happiness of the gods without making explicit that perfect happiness is not possible without perception or feeling. Lucretius denies the divinity of the earth on the ground that the earth lacks perception or feeling at all times (II 652). He thus makes us wonder whether a being ceases to be a god if it lacks perception or feeling from time to time as in sleep. Be this as it may, Lucretius rejects the deification of the earth (or of the sea, of corn, and of wine) with much less asperity than he rejects religion in general (655–660). To understand this, one must compare the present section with its parallels.

The statement on the Great Mother is closely connected with the attack on the theologico-teleological account of nature in II 165–182. The connection is indicated by the fact that no explicit polemic occurs between these two polemical passages. As we have observed, the problem of the gods is present in the whole discussion between the two passages, that is, in the discussion of the atomic composition of all things and hence also of the gods. Lucretius rejects the theologico-teleological account of nature as wrong, as a theoretical error, without saying anything about its roots in human life and its effect on it. When he speaks of the deification of the earth, however, he indicates clearly the function of that error; he thus throws new light on religion. The terror which the cult of the Great Mother causes is meant to be salutary. Lucretius does not say that it is not salutary. Religion thus appears to be a human invention which serves the purpose of counteracting the indifference of the whole to man's moral and political needs, for not all men are or can be philosophers; this is to say nothing of the question as to whether philosophy, that is, Epicurean philosophy as Lucretius understood it, enjoins patriotism and gratitude to parents. The section on the Great Mother also reminds one of the section on Venus at the beginning of the poem; to say the least, Venus, who is not mentioned in the section on the Great Mother, is not as obviously a goddess concerned with political morality as is the Great Mother; the unqualified rejection of religion which follows the invocation of Venus (I 62 ff.) is therefore less surprising than an unqualified rejection of religion following the speech on the Great Mother would be. The section on the Great Mother surely leaves us with the sting of the question as to how the unphilosophic multitude will conduct itself if it ceases to believe in gods who punish lack of patriotism and of filial piety. One wonders in particular what will happen to Memmius' patriotism or concern with the common weal (I 41–43) if Lucretius should succeed in converting him to Epicureanism.

Despite the fact that there is only a limited, if large, number of shapes of

atoms, their number (and especially the still larger number of combinations of atoms of various shapes) is sufficient to account for the enormous variety of the things which are produced by the atoms. Yet not every combination which one might imagine is possible; there are no monsters like Chimaeras, for instance. Lucretius does not speak in this section (II 661–729) of the gods, but the question of the atomic composition of the gods is present in it since he speaks here of the composition of all species of living beings: the variety of shapes of atoms must be such as to account for the fact that "all things" are born of fixed seeds, preserve their kinds, and are in need of specific food. The application to the conceit of children stemming from the intercourse of gods and men like Aeneas is obvious. One might think that the gods are not living beings. The force of this objection is destroyed by Lucretius' declaring that "these laws," which obtain regarding the coming into being and the preservation of living beings, obtain *mutatis mutandis* regarding inanimate things as well.

Lucretius turns next to the qualities which the atoms lack. They lack colors, sounds, tastes, smells, as well as hot and cold. All these qualities are changeable and perishable and cannot therefore belong to the unchangeable and imperishable atoms (749–756, 862–864). The exposition of this doctrine continues and deepens the critique of the nonatomistic doctrines which was presented in Book I, but the poet no longer engages in explicit polemics against actual or potential opponents: there is no longer any sign of resistance on the part of Memmius. The discussion of colors is far more extensive than that of all the other qualities in question taken together; in the case of colors the contrast between the things and the atoms is particularly striking: no colors without light, and the atoms exist in blind darkness (795–798).

The next step requires a somewhat greater effort.[41] The reader must now be brought to admit that the atoms, which are the origins of all living beings, lack sense or feeling—are lifeless. That animate beings emerge under certain conditions out of inanimate ones is shown by experience: worms emerge from stinking dung. In this context the poet remarks that just as inanimate things (of a not noisome character) serve as food for cattle and thus change into cattle, and the cattle into human bodies, our bodies frequently serve as food for wild beasts and birds (871–878). It is not clear whether he refers here to wild beasts and birds killing men or merely, as is more likely, to their feeding on human corpses.[42] The atoms must be lifeless in order to be deathless: to be a living being and to be mortal is the same (919). The teaching according to which the causes of all things are lifeless is sweetened to some extent in the verses with which the poet ends his speech about the qualities which the atoms lack. He draws the somewhat unexpected conclusion that we all are of heavenly origin: we all—plants, men, and wild beasts—owe our being to the rain which is sent down from the regions of the ether and which fertilizes the

earth. Ether is our common father, and Earth is our common mother. Lucretius shows that the earth is deservedly called mother: thanks to the earth, the wild beasts, to say nothing of human beings, feed their bodies, pass a sweet life, and propagate their kinds; he does not show that heaven is deservedly called father (991–1001). When we compare these verses with the Euripidean verses of which they remind us,[43] we see that Lucretius does not, as Euripides does, call Ether the progenitor of men and gods in contradistinction to the Earth who gives birth to the mortals: throughout his poem Lucretius puts a stronger emphasis on Earth than on Ether because he does not wish to speak explicitly of the origin of the gods. As father and mother, Ether and Earth would be living beings, hence mortal; hence they could not be the ultimate origins of "us all": the ultimate origin is matter, that is, the atoms; not Ether and Earth, but the atoms are the origins of everything, as Lucretius states again in the immediate sequel in which he ascribes to heaven and earth no higher status than to the sea, the rivers, the sun, the crops, the trees, and living beings (1002–1022). In his earlier speech on Mother Earth he had made clear that the earth, which lacks sense or feeling, is not a divine being (641–652). But the same is true of the ether.[44] If heaven and earth were gods, the things brought forth by them would not be as defective as they are (180–181). In other words, the world, nay, the boundless whole, grounded in nothing but the atoms and the void, is not divine. Only some parts of the whole can possibly be divine: the gods. Whatever Lucretius' doctrine of the gods may mean, it surely means that the whole or the world is not divine.[45]

The last section of Book II deals, like the last section of Book I, with the infinity of the whole. Accordingly, it is introduced by a statement (1023–1047) which is comparable to the "wormwood and honey" passage in Book I (921–950). In both introductions the poet speaks of a special effort which the reader must make in order to understand the immediate sequel. In all other respects the two introductions differ profoundly. In the second introduction the poet mentions the subject which he is about to discuss, whereas he had failed to do this in the first one. In the first introduction he had spoken of his innovation through which the harsh doctrine will be sweetened; he had spoken of a gratifying novelty without speaking of the novelty of the doctrine. Now he speaks of the novelty of the doctrine to be set forth, a repulsive novelty. Novelty as such, we are told, is disconcerting; a doctrine may even be frightening merely because it is new and as long as it is new. Lucretius urges the addressee not to reject the doctrine to be expounded merely because he is frightened by its novelty; he ought to examine it and accept it if it appears to him to be true or reject it if it is false. He seems to be less concerned with making him an Epicurean than with liberating him from fear of the new as new.[46] He creates the impression that the doctrine to be expounded can be repulsive only because it is

new or as long as it is new, or that it is not in itself repulsive. On the other hand he surely does not say that it is, or will become, exhilarating.

The new doctrine follows from the doctrine of infinity as set forth in Book I. Given the infinity of the void and of matter on the one hand and the finiteness of our world on the other, given also that our world is the work of nature or chance, there must be many worlds, nay, infinitely many worlds. There are many heavens, earths, and humankinds, just as there are within each world many individuals of the same animal species: every heaven, every earth, every animal species, has a fixed life span just as do the individuals of the species (1048–1089). The introductory verses made us expect some resistance to this doctrine on the part of the addressee or some polemics against the believers in a single world on the part of the author.[47] This expectation is disappointed. The new doctrine, which was announced so emphatically, is presented in not more than forty-two verses. One must admit that the new doctrine is upsetting: more than anything that went before, it "destroys our importance," the importance of "our" human race—and therewith of "History"—by presenting our human race as one individual among infinitely many of the same kind. The poet has his remedy ready and does not hesitate for a moment to use it: surely a whole consisting of innumerably many worlds cannot be ruled by the gods, those proud tyrants, that is, the gods of the vulgar. The infinity of the world, however unattractive in another respect, is a small price to pay for the liberation from religion. Invoking the true gods—"the holy hearts of the gods" [48]—who live in perfect tranquillity and therefore do not rule anything, he asserts that no being could possibly rule the boundless whole, take care of the innumerable heavens and earths, to say nothing of governing with justice the innumerable humankinds: not even our humankind is justly governed by gods (1090–1104). To say nothing of other defects of this reasoning, why could there not be infinitely many groups of gods, each group ruling some part of the boundless whole? Must there not be many groups of gods located in different parts of the universe if gods are to be sensed by all humankinds in the infinitely many and infinitely distant worlds?

Lucretius has not yet completed the exposition of the new teaching which he has announced. In the rest of the section he no longer speaks of the infinity of the worlds, but of an implication of this subject. He speaks of the growth of "the great world"—our world—and of its decay. By limiting himself to our world, he brings his lesson home to us. He shows that the growth and decay of the world parallels that of individual living beings. The world has already reached its old age, as is shown by the aging of the earth. The earth no longer brings forth, as it did in its youth, the huge bodies of wild beasts, but barely tiny worms; it no longer produces spontaneously rich harvests, but barely, despite men's toil, poor ones. No one

knows this better than the aged plowman who can compare the present with the past and who sees the decay of the soil going hand in hand with the decay of piety: the latifundia have ruined Italy; everything passes to the grave (1105–1174). What every old peasant knows to some extent cannot be frightening because of its novelty. By generalizing the observations of old peasants about the decay of agriculture and piety into the doctrine of the decay of the world, Lucretius may even be said to sweeten the sad doctrine in accordance with the feelings of the true Roman: the decay or end of Rome is the decay or end of the world. When he repeats the doctrine of the future destruction of the world at much greater length later on, in a more advanced stage of Memmius' education, Lucretius takes away this scaffolding: in his opinion our world is still in its youth (V 330–337). The decay of Italian agriculture and piety does not announce the speedy end of the world. Lucretius does not deny that piety and Italian agriculture are no longer what they were; but surely some of the arts are still progressing; philosophy is of recent origin, and it enters Rome only now, through Lucretius' poem.

IV. On Book III

This Book is the only one in which the poet addresses Epicurus. He does this in the proem (1–30) and nowhere else. It is also the only Book in which he mentions the name of Epicurus (1042): he never addresses Epicurus by name. One may say that throughout the work Epicurus remains the nameless *Graius homo* (I 66), or rather the nameless "glory of the Greek race" (III 3), if not a nameless god (V 8). In the present proem Lucretius apostrophizes Epicurus with the vocative *inclute* (I 10); in the proem to Book I he has apostrophized Venus in the same way (40), and in the proem to Book V he will do the same to Memmius (8); the movement from Venus to Epicurus is an ascent, and the movement from Epicurus to Memmius is a descent; the whole movement is an ascent followed by a descent. If one counts I 925–950 as the second proem,[49] the proem to Book III will be the central proem. The peak is in the center.

The praise of Epicurus at the beginning of Book III serves in the first place the purpose of bringing out the difference of rank between Epicurus and Lucretius. Lucretius is a follower, an imitator of Epicurus; he could as little rival Epicurus as a swallow could rival swans or kids a horse; as regards both beauty and force Lucretius' work belongs to a different species, to a lower species than Epicurus' work. Yet "thou art the father, the discoverer of the things." Lucretius merely profits from the discovery; Epicurus' mind is divine, whereas Lucretius receives through the master's teaching "some divine pleasure and a dread or horror." [50] Thanks to Epi-

curus' complete discovery of the nature of things, the terrors of the mind are dispelled and the walls of the world part asunder. Thus the majesty of the gods comes to sight; they are seen to dwell in tranquil and beautiful abodes, of which those of the Homeric gods on Olympus give an inkling, beyond the walls of the worlds; nature is seen to supply the gods with everything. Whereas Epicurus' discovery reveals the perfect bliss of the gods, it reveals the nonexistence of Hades. As for the nonexistence of Hades, of a miserable life after death, Lucretius is going to prove it in Book III. He does not say that, and where, he will prove the existence of the gods. He surely has not proved it before; he merely has proved, or attempted to prove, that the nature of things does not leave room for divine action on the world and its ingredients. We observe that nature is said to supply the gods with everything: nature does not supply men with everything.

In order to drive out the fear of Hades which utterly confounds human life and spoils all pleasures, Lucretius will lay bare the nature of the soul on the basis of the principles set forth in the first two Books. Men frequently say that there are things worse than hell and that they know the nature of the soul without having engaged in studies, so that they do not need Epicurean philosophy. But this is an idle boast. As soon as they have committed a crime and as a consequence suffered the disgrace of which they formerly said that it is worse than death, they cling to life and sacrifice to the dead and the gods of the dead, that is, turn to religion (31–58). Lucretius did not take issue with people who deny that they need Epicurean philosophy in order to get rid of fear of the gods: common experience seems to show that one fate befalls the just and the unjust, or that the gods do not rule the human race; but this does not exclude the possibility that the fates of the just and the unjust will be greatly different after death or that only through fear of punishment after death does the fear of the gods reach its full power. Memmius at any rate seems to be more threatened by fear of hell than by fear of the gods as such (page 80 above).

Lucretius speaks with special emphasis of the criminals' religious fear. He thus makes us wonder again whether by attempting to take away that fear he does not weaken a salutary restraint. He answers this objection as well as he can in the immediate sequel. He comes close to suggesting that the primary phenomenon is not the fear of hell, but the fear of death, and that crimes which seem to be a cause of the fear of hell are in fact a consequence of the fear of death (59–86).[51] That is to say, by freeing men from the fear of death, one does not emancipate crime from a powerful restraint; one rather contributes to the abolition of crime. We are left with the suspicion that prior to Epicurus, and in Rome even prior to Lucretius, religion served a good purpose. Given the fact that many men, nay, almost all men, will always refuse to listen to the Epicurean teaching, religion will always serve a good purpose. Lucretius concludes his statement of the sub-

ject of Book III with the same seven verses with which in Books II and VI he concludes the proems as distinguished from the statements of the subjects of those Books: just as children fear everything in the dark, "we" sometimes fear in the light things which are no whit more dreadful than what children tremble at in the dark and imagine that it will happen; this terror must be dispelled, not by the rays of the sun, but by nature coming to sight and being penetrated. Book III is *the* Book devoted to the overcoming of "our" childish fear.

Lucretius tells his reader that the soul is a part of man like the hand and therefore located in a determinate part of the body. It is not, as some Greeks have asserted, a harmony of the whole body (94–135). It is not Lucretius' manner as we have hitherto had occasion to observe it to begin his presentation of a teaching with polemics against philosophic doctrines. The polemic against "harmonism" is firm, but free from harshness or sarcasm: harmonism is as good for establishing the mortality of the soul as Epicureanism; [52] it is the first doctrine explicitly discussed which is rejected merely because it is wrong and not at the same time with a view to its effect on man's feelings. If any doubt were left, the discussion of harmonism would show that Epicureanism is not needed for liberating the mind from the terrors of religion.

The soul is a single nature consisting of the *animus* and the *anima*. The *animus*, or the mind, is located in the breast, is the ruler of the whole body, and is at the same time that through which we suffer fear, joy, and the like; the understanding and the passions belong together. The *anima* is spread through the whole body and obeys the *animus*. The distinction is meant to explain that there is what one may call a particular freedom of man. The *animus* alone and by itself can understand and can feel pleasures and pains which are not pleasures and pains of the body (136–160). Both parts of the soul must be bodily, as is shown by the fact that they affect our body and are affected by it, for nothing can affect a body and be affected by it without touch, and nothing can touch or be touched except body (161–176). Since the acts of the *animus* are capable of unrivaled swiftness and nimbleness, it must consist of very round, very smooth, and very tiny parts. This insight into the nature of the *animus* is of very great importance, as the poet indicates both explicitly and by addressing the reader in a unique way (*o bone*). Things which consist of such parts are more easily dissolved than things consisting of parts of the opposite description. The fact that the *animus* through which we can sense or feel is of such a fine texture and can be contained in a very small place explains why the contours and the weight of a man immediately after his death do not differ from his contours and weight immediately before it. The same fact proves that the *anima* too consists of very tiny particles. The poet compares the soul in this respect to the flavor of wine, or as he puts it here, of Bacchus; this is the first time that he mentions a god or a pseudo god by name in the

Book (177–230). In no other Book are gods as rarely mentioned with or without name as in Book III.

The soul consists of heat, air, and wind and of a fourth nature which is nameless and which accounts for sensing and thinking (231–257). Lucretius opens his explanation of how those ingredients are mingled with one another by apologizing again for the defects of his exposition, which are due to the poverty of his "paternal speech." The second reference to "the paternal speech" (260) differs from the first (I 832) since it follows the sole reference to "the paternal precepts" (III 9–10), namely, the precepts given by Epicurus; Lucretius has two fathers or fatherlands, one by virtue of language (or blood) and another by virtue of the mind; the precepts which bind or guide him stem exclusively from the latter. Of the four ingredients of the soul the nameless one is the soul of the soul and rules the whole body. As for the three other ingredients, each of them predominates in different species of animals. Here Lucretius tacitly makes clear for the first time that his doctrine of the soul is not merely a doctrine of the human soul;[53] he is, however, silent on the specific difference of the human soul.[54] Men, like oxen, stand in the middle between the hot-hearted and angry lions and the coldhearted and fearful deer. There are natural differences in this respect also between the individuals of the same species, at least of the human species. Training or education can make some men equally refined; it cannot eradicate the fundamental, natural diversity or inequality. But reason is strong enough to expel the traces of those natural defects so that nothing stands in the way of a life worthy of gods (262–322). Does Lucretius mean that every man, however dull-witted he may be, can grasp the Epicurean doctrine and thus be enabled to lead a life worthy of the gods? Would this throw any light on the intelligence of the gods? Does he mean that, as a matter of principle, every human being can live in freedom from religion? Is this true even of children who tremble at everything and fear it when it is dark (87–88)? As a matter of fact, all men were under the spell of the terrors of religion prior to the daring act of a Greek who had a divine mind, and presumably all Romans are still in that condition before they have read Lucretius' poem. The primary addressee of the poem is Memmius, who is supposed to possess a keen mind (I 50, IV 912). Now it seems that Memmius would not have to possess a keen mind in order to derive the greatest benefit from Lucretius' poem. Are we entitled to doubt Memmius' native excellence? Such a doubt would be compatible with the fact that Lucretius wishes his potential friend to share in his most cherished possession. Yet he addresses, of course, indefinitely many Romans, most of whom will be men of mean capacities: he attempts to propagate Epicurean philosophy in Rome. The motive of this attempt, we submit, is not merely love of praise (cf. pages 91–92 above); even a philosopher who does not care for the city is in need of support or protection by politically active and powerful men.

The section with which Lucretius concludes his exposition of the nature of the soul consists of three parts. He shows first that the soul cannot be without the body and vice versa. Body and soul come into being together and perish together. No sensation or feeling is possible without the cooperation of body and soul. It is true that the soul is the immediate cause of sensing, but it is an error to hold that only the soul senses while using the body merely as an instrument (323–369). In the central part Lucretius takes issue with the view of Democritus regarding the local order of the body atoms and the soul atoms. The treatment of the Democritean doctrine near the end of the discussion of the nature of the soul reminds of the treatment of harmonism at its beginning: the Democritean doctrine would not render questionable the mortality of the soul. Lucretius indeed treats Democritus or his doctrine with much greater respect than harmonism; he applies to him or to his doctrine the epithet "sacred"; Democritus is the only human being to whom or to whose doctrine he ever applies that epithet unqualifiedly;[55] he never applies it to Epicurus. He fails to apply it to Democritus in the central reference to him (III 1037) where Democritus' inferiority to Epicurus is clearly brought out. This throws light on his calling "sacred" the gods' bodies, their *numina*, and so on. Finally, the poet restates the supremacy of the *animus* over the *anima* and the body (396–416). While he is primarily concerned with the mortality of the soul, he is very much concerned with its being the ruling part in man, nay, in all living beings. Since he holds the soul to be as corporeal as the body, he is not compelled to regard the acts of the soul as mere epiphenomena of the body; he can leave intact the "commonsensical" distinction between soul and body.

The center of Book III (417–829) is devoted to the proof that the souls are born and die. That proof consists of a large number of arguments which are more or less independent of one another. In no other case does Lucretius devote so many verses and so many arguments to the proof of a single proposition. One could think that the coming into being and perishing of the souls is sufficiently established by the fact that they are compounds of atoms. Yet the gods are also compounds of atoms and nevertheless supposed to be immortal. It is true that the Epicurean gods do not live within the world or worlds, while the souls do. But could the souls not live within the world and then, if they have lived piously here, withdraw to the *intermundia* in which the gods dwell, to Islands of the Blessed, as it were? Lucretius turns therefore to reasonings based on the specific characters of the soul which, after all, are better known to him than those of the gods. In introducing these reasonings he reminds us that his verses are to be worthy of Memmius' "life" (420) without, however, mentioning Memmius' name; he reminds us of his esteem for Memmius. The first argument makes clear that the soul is mortal because it is a compound of particularly small and mobile atoms which are kept together by the body;

but the body is manifestly mortal. In what looks at first glance like an excursus, Lucretius illustrates the mobility of the soul by the ease with which it is moved through slender causes; it is moved not only by smoke and clouds but even by images of smoke and clouds; for instance, when asleep we see high altars breathing steam and sending up their smoke (425–444).

When attempting to prove the mortality of the soul, Lucretius cannot help presenting to us vividly the sad spectacles of men's sudden or slow deaths, of their diseases and decay, although he never comes near to that accumulation of horrors which he has reserved for the end of his work. He makes no attempt to sweeten the sad; the sweetening thought is the consideration, which now indeed remains unexpressed, that death, however slow and painful, is preferable to the terrors of Hades. This thought remains so little expressed that Lucretius now uses men's great unwillingness to die, their eagerness to clutch at the last tie of life, as a proof of the mortality of the soul: if our souls were immortal, we would not mind dying (597–614). However unreasonable the fear of death may be, it seems to be quite natural.[56] We may note some slight signs of resistance on the part of the addressee,[57] but the poet does not engage in explicit polemics against other schools of thought while proving the mortality of the soul (425–669); he engages in such polemics while attempting to refute the belief in the pre-existence of the soul (670 ff.).[58] The reason is that he does not take seriously the belief in the immortality of the soul if it is not accompanied by the belief in its pre-existence: only an eternal soul can be immortal (cf. 670–673).

The reference to men's revulsion from death as a proof or sign of the mortality of the soul occurs shortly before the end of the section that deals with the soul's immortality as distinguished from its pre-existence. It is followed by three more arguments in support of mortality. The two last of these arguments refer in very different ways to hearsay. According to Lucretius, one cannot assert the immortality of the soul without asserting the immortality of the five senses and hence of their organs; the painters and writers of old presented the souls in Acheron as endowed with the senses; but the senses cannot exist without the whole body (624–633). The implication is that the painters and writers of old acted more reasonably than the more recent philosophers who assert the immortality of the soul bereft of the senses. Lucretius is silent here about the ancient writers' presenting the souls as undergoing eternal punishment in Hades (I 111). In the last argument (634–669) he uses his knowledge through hearsay of the maiming and killing caused by scythe-bearing chariots. We do not know whether Memmius had firsthand knowledge of battles in which such chariots were used; Lucretius surely had not. This is not to deny that the poet may have observed other kinds of battles from afar (II 5–6).

The antepenultimate argument in support of mortality (615–623) is repeated and enlarged in the argument that concludes the central part of

Book III (784–829). The thought which Lucretius repeats is that everything has its place outside of which it cannot be; the mind cannot be in the shoulders or in the heels, for instance; still less can it be outside the whole body. He enlarges this thought by the consideration that the eternal or immortal cannot be linked with the mortal. He then raises the question as to what kinds of things are immortal and finds that the soul does not belong to them. He identifies three kinds of immortal things: the atoms, the void, and the universe. He does not mention the gods. But he compels us to think of the gods by raising the question as to what kinds of things are, or can be, immortal. He may allude to the gods by saying that things may be eternal if there is no place without into which their parts may scatter or if there are no bodies which could assault them; for this condition could be thought to be fulfilled in the *intermundia* in which the gods are said to dwell. At any rate, the central part of Book III begins and ends with allusions not so much to the gods as to the problem of the gods.

In the last part of Book III Lucretius draws the practical conclusion from his proof of the soul's mortality: death is nothing to us. The conclusion does not follow from the proof since we naturally recoil from death as from a very great evil. Lucretius must therefore show in addition that our revulsion from death is due to a delusion. It could be thought that by liberating us from this delusion he weakens our concern with preserving our lives. Besides, the brutes too recoil from death; are they too under the spell of a delusion? Yet Lucretius both as an atomist and as a human being knows the power of death or the eagerness with which men cling to "the sweet light of life" (V 989). He shows that he has considered the objections to his thesis by the way in which he concludes the passage under discussion; he concludes it by opposing "immortal death" to "mortal life." The delusion is said to consist in our believing that we are still alive and feeling while we no longer are. We can be as little affected by what happens after our death as we were affected by what happened before we were born: we were not affected by the Punic Wars when the rule over all men was at stake between the Carthaginians and the other side (830–869). Lucretius opens the last part of Book III with a somewhat subdued reassertion of Romanism.[59] In the same context he touches briefly on the possibility that the same atomic compound which is a given man was frequently produced long before his time. He disposes of it by the consideration that the same atomic compound was not the same man since no memory links the earlier and the later. He does not speak of the possibility of a return of the same compound.

Lucretius next shows us a man who pities himself by imagining the terrible or disgraceful things which will happen to him, that is, to his body, after his death; that man imagines that he himself can stand by his corpse and look at it; he imputes to his corpse the feelings which he, a living man, has (870–893). Lucretius next presents to us living men addressing a man

who just died, pitying him for what he has lost. They do not add, Lucretius observes, that the dead man no longer yearns for what he has lost; Lucretius states in their direct speech what they ought to say to the dead man, just as he has stated in their direct speech what they do say to him. He then makes them say to the dead man what they would say if they were to consider that he is not aware of anything: thou hast no reason to grieve, but we have reason for everlasting grief. He finds fault with what he makes them, or rather one of them, say—no one has reason for everlasting grief —but he does not address this reproach to them; he never speaks to them. Instead he makes them state another of their untutored speeches, and he again refutes it without addressing them. At the end of this refutation he calls death "the chill stopping of life" (894–930). His next action is still more extraordinary than the one which we just described: he makes the nature of things speak to any one of us, to whom she applies the vocatives "thou mortal" and "thou fool" (933, 939). Nature herself is made to proclaim how unreasonable it is to regard death as a great evil, regardless of whether one has lived hitherto happily or miserably. Lucretius, having listened together with his reader to Nature's speech, finds that the only answer which "we" can give to Nature is that she is right. He then makes Nature address an oldish man who fears death more than it is just to do; she naturally deals more harshly with him than with the younger men; she applies to him the vocative "thou criminal" (955). Having listened to Nature's second and last speech, Lucretius finds again that Nature would be right in making her reproaches. He then gives the reader or addressee additional reasons why Nature's verdict and action are sound: the old must give way to the new; if we look at death in the light of Nature, death ceases to be terrible. Neither Lucretius nor the addressee or reader speaks to Nature—which does not mean that Nature does not speak to the addressee.

There is a noteworthy contrast between the central section of the last part of Book III—the section in which Nature is made to speak and Lucretius comments on her speeches (931–977)—and the next section, which is altogether undramatic, that is, in which not even the second person is ever used (978–1023). The poet speaks now of the terrors of hell, the denial of which seemed to be the primary reason for denying the possibility of a life after death; these terrors have proved to be of secondary importance. While it is true that only through the fear of hell does the fear of the gods acquire its full power, and hence Memmius is threatened by the fear of hell rather than by the fear of the gods as such (see page 105 above), it appears that not the fear of hell, but the fear of death, is the enemy of our happiness; the fear of hell threatens, not man as man, but the unjust. This means that Lucretius ascribes some importance to the terrors of hell: he does not even take the trouble to deny in so many words that a blessed life after death is reserved for the just; he wishes to remain silent about religion as a possibly pleasant and salutary delusion. He need not give a special

proof in order to deny that there is a hell after he has proved the mortality of the souls. He limits himself therefore to explaining the stories of hell in terms of the evils of human life. To cite only the central example, the true Sisyphus is the man who runs for public office, for he wishes to lay hold on a power which always eludes him, that is, which always remains precarious.

After the interlude on the terrors of hell, which was necessary in order to bring out the peculiarity regarding both subject matter and manner of treatment of the surrounding sections, Lucretius turns to telling the reader something which he should tell himself from time to time: the reader is to play the role previously played by men in general and, above all, by Nature. Yet what he is to tell himself reads as if Lucretius were telling it to him, as if Lucretius were addressing him. It is then Lucretius who tells his addressee, whom he apostrophizes now as "thou knave," that much better men than he have died and that therefore he should not make any fuss about his dying. The language which he uses is stronger than the language previously used by Nature. He reminds the reader of six men who have died. The first three are political men: the Roman king Ancus, the Persian king Xerxes, whose name and country are not mentioned, and Scipio, the terror of Carthage. The last three men are philosophers and poets: Homer, Democritus, and Epicurus; Epicurus' genius surpassed that of all other men. The men of outstanding minds are all Greeks (1024–1052). The political men are all non-Greeks: they are all barbarians. Romanism is a kind of barbarism. It is proper that Lucretius should make some effort to entrust this speech to somebody else.

The sequel—the end of Book III—is as undramatic or nearly so as the interlude that deals with the terrors of hell; it tacitly takes up the theme that hell is the life of the fools here. Men live in the way they do because they suffer from a burden the causes of which they do not know; hence no one knows what he wants and changes from one thing or place to another; everyone runs away from himself, but he cannot escape from himself; he is sick without knowing the cause of his sickness; if he knew that cause, he would leave everything else and first attempt to know the nature of things, for what is at stake is his condition in eternity—the "eternal death" from which he cannot escape and from which he foolishly attempts to escape. The flight from oneself is the flight from one's death (1053–1094). To study nature means to learn to accept one's death without delusion or rebellion and hence to live well.

The last part of Book III tells us what the right posture toward death is. In this context Lucretius presents seven utterances of beings other than the poet in direct speech. Direct speech of beings other than Lucretius occurs only here and twice in Book I (803–808, 897–900), but in Book I the speaker in question is the addressee, and he speaks in defense of philosophic doctrines, that is, within the context of Lucretius' polemics against philosophic doctrines; whereas in Book III the polemic is directed against

common, nay universal, opinion, and the speakers are men in general, Nature, and the addressee as a mask for Lucretius. In the speeches of Nature and of the addressee as a mask for Lucretius there occurs an unusually large number of vocatives; those speakers apostrophize their addressee as "thou mortal," "thou fool," "thou criminal," and "thou knave." Lucretius himself has apostrophized his addressee earlier in Book III (206) as "thou good one." It so happens that Lucretius apostrophizes the addressee after Book III only in Book V, where he apostrophizes him five times "o Memmius." (He apostrophizes him "o Memmius" altogether nine times in the poem.) The difference between the manner in which Lucretius, speaking in his own name on the one hand and speaking through a mask on the other, apostrophizes his addressee deserves notice, although it is not surprising.[60]

V. On Book IV

The proem almost literally repeats the wormwood-honey passage in Book I. The most obvious change consists in the omission of the remark on the poet's desire for praise (I 922–923). The most important change is the change of the context, for, as we have observed more than once, the context, the place where a statement occurs, may be crucial for its meaning; identically the same statement may have a different meaning in a different context. The same verses which were first used for introducing the discussion of infinity now open a whole Book. While their meaning at their first occurrence must be understood also in the light of their immediate sequel, their meaning at their second and last occurrence cannot be so understood. The proem to Book IV deals with the relation of Lucretius' poetry to Epicurean philosophy. So does the proem to Book III. The proem to Book IV supplements, and therewith corrects, the proem to Book III, just as the proem to Book II may be said to correct the proem to Book I (cf. note 29). Lucretius or his work does not, as we were told in the proem to Book III, unqualifiedly belong to a lower species than Epicurus or his work. In the proem to Book III, Lucretius had compared himself to a swallow and Epicurus to a swan. From now on he compares himself to a swan (IV 181, 910). The proem to Book IV does not contain a praise of Epicurus.

The subject of Book IV or of its first part, as stated by the poet, is the proper sequel to the discussion of the soul in the preceding Book: [61] the likenesses of things; for those likenesses which fly through the air frighten us when we are awake and also in sleep, when we behold wondrous shapes and the likenesses of the departed. One must explain the likenesses of things lest "we" believe that something of us remains after death in Hades or elsewhere (26–44). This seems to mean that the many proofs

given in Book III are not quite sufficient to establish the mortality of the souls. But how could this be? The belief in punishment after death presupposes not only the immortality of the souls but the existence of punishing gods as well. Perhaps the explanation of the likenesses throws light on the belief in such gods or in gods in general. In the proem (6–7) Lucretius has reminded us of his purpose to liberate the mind from the bondage of religion. The only way in which we can know, according to the Epicurean doctrine, of the gods' being and their nature is through their likenesses or images which reach us after they have passed through the flaming walls of the world. Someone might say that Lucretius' discussion of the likenesses or images in Book IV has no relation whatever to his teaching regarding the gods since the very terms "likenesses" (*simulacra*) and "images" (*imagines*) do not occur in his statement about how men have come to know of the gods.[62] This objection could at least as well be used in support of the opposite assertion. Paintings and statues of the gods are also called "likenesses" and "images." [63] The difficulty which we have indicated may explain why Lucretius gives a second justification of his present theme by linking the subject "the likenesses of things," not to the doctrine of the soul, but to the atomistic doctrine in general (45–53).

The likenesses or images are minute bodies on the surface of the things; they are hurled forward by pressure from within the things; each likeness is propelled immediately by the succeeding one; the succession never ceases; the likenesses are carried away with incredible speed in all directions; they are so tiny that they cannot be seen. Streaming from the surfaces of the things, they preserve the things' shapes and colors without alteration. If certain conditions are fulfilled, they literally transmit to us faithful images or copies of the shape and color of the thing in question. Yet not all likenesses stream directly from things. Some likenesses are formed in the air; they can be compared to the shapes which clouds sometimes take on like those of giants and other fear-inspiring things. Besides, genuine likenesses are deformed by the air on their way from the things to our eyes. Our shadows seem to walk and to gesticulate, whereas, being lifeless, they are incapable of walking and gesticulating (129–142, 168–175, 352–378).

A square tower seen from afar looks round; this means that the likeness of the tower has become round on its way from the tower to our eyes; it is as genuine as the square likeness which hits us when we are near the tower. This is to say that not the eyes are deceived, but the mind, for it is the reasoning of the mind, not the eyes, through which we can know the nature of the things. In a sense we see everything (462) which appears to us as visible, regardless of whether we are awake or asleep at the time, and this fact can easily shake our trust in the senses. Yet it is not the fault of the senses if we do not distinguish between the things manifest—the likenesses as such—and the things dubious—what the mind adds of its own. This fault is indeed hard to avoid since nothing is harder than to make that dis-

tinction intelligently, especially, we may add, when the appearances are wondrous (33–36). Lucretius indicates or imitates the difficulty by his use of the passive forms of *videre* which mean here (379–468) in all cases but one (428) "to seem" or, as the poet makes clear, "to be believed" (387–388, 401–402), or "merely to seem" (433–434), or "to be contrary to the truth" (444–446). The section under discussion contains the greatest density of *videri* that occurs in the whole work [64] while it does not contain a single mention of *simulacra* or *imagines*. Lucretius concludes his discussion of the likenesses by restating the case for the trustworthiness of the senses against two views; his polemic does not claim, however, to be directed against philosophic schools. If one does not trust the senses, one is led to deny the possibility of knowledge altogether; but apart from the fact that by denying the possibility of knowledge one asserts that one possesses knowledge, one cannot deny the possibility of knowledge without knowing what knowledge is, without having experienced knowing. The other alternative to trust in the senses is trust in reason, but reason is wholly founded on the senses; hence if the senses cannot be trusted, reason cannot be trusted; without trust in the senses, reason, nay, life itself, collapses. Trust in the senses is the first of all trusts (469–521).

Lucretius turns next to the question as to how each of the other senses perceives what belongs to it. He speaks first of hearing. The principle of explanation is the same as in the case of sight, which does not mean that Lucretius does not pay some attention to the peculiarities of hearing (cf. 595–614). He is more concerned with voices than with sounds in general. He is very much concerned with proving the corporeal character of voices. Within the central part of the section on hearing he explains the echo. In giving this explanation he addresses the reader in an unusual manner; he says to him that if he understands the explanation well, he can give an account of the phenomena in question to himself and to others (572–573); he reckons with the possibility that at least a part of his teaching will be transmitted by his reader or readers to men who are not his readers. The explanation of the echo permits Lucretius to explain the sounds traced especially by rustics living in lonely places to satyrs, nymphs, fauns, and in particular to Pan; beings of this kind exist only in speech or are known only through hearsay (580–594). It seems that people may believe in gods without having been moved to do so by any images, however deformed. Differently stated, no sound ever heard by us stems from gods. This does not contradict the fact that we are supposed to know that the Epicurean gods utter "haughty sounds" (V 1173–1174). However haughty their sounds may be, the gods cannot be our "haughty lords" (II 1091)—if for no other reason, then at least because their sounds cannot reach us since they would have to travel through the flaming walls of the world.

Lucretius turns next, not, as one would expect, to smell, but to taste; he does not discuss touch at all. As a consequence, the discussion of taste oc-

cupies the center of the section devoted to the senses other than sight. Lucretius is particularly concerned with the fact that the same food tastes sweet or bitter to different kinds of beings, that is, to different kinds of atomic compounds. He opens his discussion of this subject by another unusual expression; his discussion serves the purpose, he says, "that we may see how and why for different beings there is different food" (633–634);[65] it looks as if the poet himself were listening to his own instruction or as if he were still learning while teaching.[66] Things taste differently to different kinds of beings, that is, the tastes are not copies of the qualities of the things; when one sees the things, their shapes and colors are preserved; but one destroys the things when tasting them. As for smells, they come from the interior of the things smelled and not, as the likenesses, from their surface; the same kinds of smells attract or repel different species of living beings. In addition, the species differ in regard to the keenness of their power of smelling. Men are less apt to discern wholesome food by their sense of smell than are wild beasts, while in other respects men's senses are superior to those of other animals.

Lucretius turns next to the question as to by what and whence the mind (*mens*) is moved. This section too is opened by an unusual expression.[67] We understand this section better if we look forward to the fact that "the nature of the gods is subtle and far removed from our senses" (V 148–149). "The subtle nature of the mind" is moved to the perception peculiar to it by "subtle" likenesses of things which wander in the air and become linked with one another; those combined likenesses are more subtle than the likenesses which cause the vision of the eyes. In this way we "see" Centaurs, Scyllas, Cerberus, and the likenesses of the dead. We recall that the explanation of such sights is the guiding purpose of the discussion of likenesses in general (IV 29 ff.). The expression "we see" is justified to the extent that the awareness of beings like the Centaurs is caused by likenesses just as the awareness of ordinary things is. Needless to say, there are no Centaurs and the like; the likenesses of Centaurs are produced by chance meetings of the likenesses of horses with those of men. A single image of this kind is sufficient to stir our mind, which is exceedingly subtle and mobile. The mind's "seeing" is more powerful when we are asleep than when we are awake: it is in our dreams that "we seem to behold," or that "our mind believes it sees," the dead (722–776). All this does not mean that there are no likenesses affecting the mind which copy things that are as they are; without such likenesses true thinking would be impossible.

Up to this point the chief subject of Book IV is the likenesses or images. What the chief subject of the second half of the Book is, is not easy to say. The first half may be said to consist of three parts: (1) the likenesses and vision, (2) the three other senses discussed, (3) thought. The second half also consists of three parts: (1) critique of the teleological view (823–857); (2) explanation (*a*) of the need for food, (*b*) of how we are able to

move our limbs in various ways, (*c*) of sleep and dreams (858–1036); and (3) explanation and critique of love (1037–1287). Lucretius first attacks the view that the parts of the body were brought into being for their use (the eyes for the sake of seeing, for instance); according to him their usefulness and the awareness of it are consequent upon their having come into being; only in the case of artifacts does awareness of usefulness precede the coming into being. This criticism does not present itself as directed against a philosophic school. More important, it is the only criticism of teleology occurring in the work which contains no reference whatever to the gods. The poet desires to remain silent on the gods in the present context. But not to mention the gods is not the same as not to think of them. We have stated earlier that in no other Book are gods as rarely mentioned with or without name as in Book III. We must now correct this statement with a view to the fact that the poet speaks very frequently in the last section of Book IV of Venus, meaning by this word not the goddess, but simply sexual love.

Let us now consider the central part of the last half of Book IV. "Food" had already been discussed from a different point of view in the central part of the first half of Book IV, namely, when the sense of taste was being considered. But then "food" occupied the central place, a place taken in the second half by "movement of the limbs." Movement of the limbs is the action most emphatically ascribed to the gods in the section par excellence devoted to the gods: "men ascribed sense to the gods because the gods were seen to move their limbs" (V 1172–1173); the gods' moving their limbs is the *ratio cognoscendi* of the gods' sensing (and perhaps thinking), or of the gods' being living beings. There is no difficulty in reconciling this with the facts that the likenesses of the dead seem to move their limbs when they appear to us in our dreams and that our shadows seem to walk (IV 364–369, 756–770). The difficulty is this. Our voluntary movements are preceded by images or likenesses of those movements; these images are very small bodies, and yet they set in motion the whole large bulk of our bodies. Lucretius disposes of this difficulty with ease. For all we know, he explained the gods' moving their bodies, which are of wondrous bulk (V 1171), in the same manner, but he is silent as to how the gods can move their limbs. As for food, all living beings need food in order to repair the losses which they incur especially through their exertions. The gods are seen in our dreams to accomplish many wondrous things without undergoing any toil (V 1181–1182); hence they would not seem to be in need of food; Lucretius is silent on this subject.

Dreams were first discussed in connection with thinking; in the repetition they are discussed in connection with sleep. The discussion of sleep is introduced with nine verses in which Lucretius speaks of how he will treat that subject—he will treat it in sweet verses rather than in many—and urges his reader, who is again assumed to possess a keen mind, to listen

carefully and thus to accept the true teaching. Sleep, we are told, liberates the mind from its cares. Thus one might think that it is a most desirable state. Lucretius does not draw this conclusion. Sleep is due to a disordering of the positions of the body atoms and the mind atoms (IV 943–944). This disordering brings about a disturbance of the soul and hence in particular the suspension of sensing. Lucretius speaks here in all cases but one (944) of the *anima*, and not of the *animus*, thus permitting us to imagine that the *animus* can perceive the gods (V 1170–1171) while the *anima* is dormant. Surely in his first discussion of dreams (IV 722–822), in which he has spoken of our seeing Centaurs and the like, he has spoken only of *animus* and *mens*. In the second discussion he gives seventeen examples of dreams or kinds of dreams; in the ninth example (1008) there occurs the only mention of "gods" or of "divine" that occurs between verses 591 and 1233. He now states that we mostly dream of the thing with which we were preoccupied while we were awake or that the likenesses which enter the mind when we are asleep are the same as those which we previously apprehended with the senses. What we dream depends on "interest and will." The same is true of the beasts. Dogs, for instance, dream of hunting wild beasts, and after they have been awakened by such dreams they still pursue "the empty likenesses of stags"; puppies behave in their dreams "as if they beheld unknown forms and faces." Other examples show that what living beings dream of depends on their fears. Sometimes the likenesses believed to be seen do not precede the emotions or the movements of the limbs, but are called forth by them. The likenesses of every body which appear to males ripe for the discharge of the semen seem to announce "a glorious face and a beautiful color" and thus to facilitate that discharge (962–1036). One is tempted to say that it is not only fear but love too which gives rise to visions of superhuman beings, of beings of superhuman beauty and splendor; but it is wise to resist such temptations. Certain it is that both Lucretian discussions of dreams do not in any way suggest that through dreams we have an access (or a superior access) to beings that are and to which we have no access (or only an inferior access) while we are awake.

The last part of Book IV is devoted to Venus, who, according to the beginning of the poem, is the deity par excellence. We have learned in the meantime that Venus, so far from being a deity, is nothing but a personification of sexual love (cf. II 655–657 and 437). We also have learned what to think of favorites of Venus like Paris. We learn now that sexual love, so far from being divine, is a great threat to our happiness, although perhaps not as great a threat as fear of death. The attack on love in the last section of Book IV corresponds to the attack on the fear of death in the last section of Book III, and the deepest reason for this correspondence might well be the fact that both fear and love are roots of the belief in gods. The fate of Venus in the poem indicates the fate of all gods in it; Venus is re-

lated to the true gods as the true gods are to the truth about the true gods. Love is a wound of the mind, the beloved like a mortal enemy. Love promises pleasure, but the pleasure which it gives is followed by chilly care. From this we draw the conclusion that the gods cannot feel love, just as they do not need food or sleep; Lucretius does not draw this conclusion. Love is love of one, boy or woman; in order to enjoy the fruit of Venus without suffering from the cares which she brings with her, one must separate sexual pleasure from love. The ingredient of enmity in love reveals itself in the very act of embrace. The lovers hope that by their embrace their desire will be stilled, but this hope cannot be fulfilled, for the beauty which arouses the love is only a delicate likeness which cannot enter the body like food or drink; the lovers are mocked by images just as the thirsty man who dreams of drinking (1048–1120). The sufferings of lovers are aggravated by their self-deception; the lover ascribes to his beloved more than it is right to ascribe to any mortal; he regards her as Venus herself or as some other entirely flawless being which has nothing whatever to conceal. Hence one frees oneself from the fetters of love best by thinking of the defects of mind and body which the beloved is bound to have (1153–1191). All this does not mean that venereal desire and pleasure is not natural; brutes have no less a share in it than men (1192–1208). We may say that it is as natural as the fear of death. Sterility is not due to divine action and therefore cannot be counteracted by sacrifices to the gods (1233–1247). Nor is it due to divine action that sometimes a woman of indifferent attractiveness comes to be loved (1278–1287). Philosophy counteracts love as it counteracts fear. There is no link between philosophy and *eros*.

VI. On Book V

The proem to Book V is devoted, as is the proem to Book III, to the praise of Epicurus. But in the proem to Book V Lucretius does not address Epicurus; he praises Epicurus while addressing Memmius by name. He indicates again that his work is inferior to that of Epicurus: no poem can match "the grandeur of the things and the discoveries" of Epicurus; surely no one formed of a mortal body can produce a poem which fits Epicurus' deserts. It would seem that only a god could chant Epicurus' praises adequately, for is not Epicurus himself a god? If one must speak in accordance with what the known grandeur of the things itself demands, one must say that Epicurus was a god, for he was the greatest benefactor of men that ever was. In order to see that Epicurus was a god, it suffices that one compare his discoveries with the divine discoveries of others which were made in antiquity, with the discoveries said to have been made by Ceres and Liber. Those discoveries are not necessary for life; there are said to be peoples which live without bread and wine. Epicurus' discovery, however, is neces-

sary for living well; it makes possible happiness amidst great peoples. It is safe to assume that those great peoples include not only the Greeks but the Romans as well. In accordance with this Lucretius indicates here that the Romans are not barbarians and in Book V, as distinguished from the two preceding Books, addresses Memmius by name. Lucretius then compares Epicurus' benefactions with the famous deeds of Heracles. By killing the famous monsters Heracles and others have not disposed of the wild beasts and other terrors with which the earth still abounds. Epicurus, however, has taught men how to cleanse their hearts from desires and fears, from the vices of all kinds. Therefore he deserves to be ranked among the gods. He deserves this rank above all since he was wont to utter well and divinely many sayings about the immortal gods themselves and to reveal in his sayings the whole nature of things (1–54). Epicurus was then a god, if we understand by a god not a being which is deathless, but a supreme benefactor of men. He is, or was, not the only god: he deserves to be ranked among the gods. But are those gods, the immortal gods, also benefactors of the human race? Does the notion underlying the praise of Epicurus as a god not render doubtful the notion underlying the Epicurean conception of the gods? Is the praise of Epicurus as a god not tantamount to saying that Epicurus was a god because he denied the godness of the gods? Why does Lucretius praise here most highly, not Epicurus' revealing the whole nature of things, but his speeches about the immortal gods? [68]

Lucretius follows Epicurus to the extent that he teaches by what law "everything" has been created; he does not say here that he will reproduce his master's well and divinely framed sayings about the immortal gods. He has shown before that the mind is mortal because it is inseparable from a body which has come into being. He must show now that the world is mortal because it has come into being; he must show how all its parts have come into being. The human things belong to those parts; of the human things Lucretius mentions here only speech and religion; the genesis, the atomic composition, of reason has been not indeed discussed but intimated before, in Book III; reason and religion are the most important human phenomena. He will also explain how nature steers the courses of sun and moon lest "we" think that those bodies move of their own will in order to favor the crops and the living beings or that those bodies are moved by gods. That the heavenly bodies cannnot be moved by gods follows indeed from the fundamental theologoumenon, but if one does not know precisely how they are moved, one is tempted time and again to relapse into the ancient fears of harsh, omnipotent lords (55–90). Epicurus' divine sayings about the immortal gods are less useful for the liberation from religion than his astronomy.

Lucretius begins to fulfill his promise that he will prove the mortality of the world by telling Memmius, whom he again addresses by name, that sea, earth, and heaven, those three bodies so different from each other, will

perish on a single day. That heaven and earth will perish is a novel and hence incredible assertion; it is not supported by Memmius' experience. Yet perhaps he will soon be a witness of an earthquake which will shake his confidence in the stability of the world. The doctrine of the mortality of the world is frightening not only because it is novel but because the destruction of the world is terrible in itself (91–109).[69] The teaching that the soul is mortal is gratifying because it relieves us from the fear of hell. The teaching that the world is mortal is not gratifying because, so far from relieving us from any fear, it adds to our fears. Yet can the world be immortal if it is not the work of gods, and will these gods not be harsh lords? Yet as preservers of the world will they not also be beneficent?

Before taking on this difficulty Lucretius makes two more promises. He promises to prove the mortality of the world, or rather to reveal the future destiny of mankind in a more sacred and in a much more certain manner than the Pythia. But before he will proclaim this superior revelation, he will supply the reader with many solaces (110–114). That is to say, he promises to show that the mortality of the world is preferable to its immortality, just as the mortality of the soul is more desirable than its immortality. Yet the reader needs first some comfort against his fear that by denying the immortality and hence the divinity of the world or of its most conspicuous parts he will commit a monstrous crime and be punished like the giants of old. Lucretius, who is not averse to repeating himself, no longer retorts that religion rather than its rejection is a crime or responsible for crimes.[70] He limits himself to proving that religion is based on untruth. Heaven, sea, and earth, sun, moon, and stars are not divine because they lack vital motion and sense or mind. By gods we understand beings which possess vital motion and sense or mind, and such beings must possess appropriate bodies such as none of those parts of the world possess (114–145). This argument would prove that the gods must have bodies resembling human bodies, if Lucretius did not ascribe mind (*mens*) also to brutes.[71] He goes on to assert that no part of the world can be an abode of the gods; the world is in no sense divine. The abodes of the gods must fit the gods' subtle nature, which is not accessible to our senses, but is barely seen by the mind. Lucretius promises the reader to prove in a copious speech what he has said about the nature and the abodes of the gods (146–155); he does not promise that he will prove the existence of the gods. Nor does he keep his promise, although he had said that the speeches about the immortal gods are his master's greatest achievement (52–54).

Not only is the world not divine; it is not even the work of gods. People say that the gods have willed to fashion the glorious nature of the world for the sake of man and hence that the world is immortal. Lucretius again takes issue with the view that it is sinful to deny the immortality of the world, and he again fails to counter it by referring to the crimes caused by religion. But in discussing the divine origin of the world as distinguished

from its divinity he again addresses Memmius by name. He argues as follows. The gods, as perfectly self-sufficient beings—as *entia perfectissima* —have no reason whatever to create the world, to do anything for our sake. Blessed beings have no reason for being kind. Nor would it have been unkind of the gods not to create us, for beings which are not do not suffer from not being. Besides, it is hard to see how the gods could have had a pattern of things to be created, and in particular of man, or how they could have known how to produce the world out of the atoms, if nature itself had not supplied them with such a pattern (156–194). This argument leads one to wonder whether the self-sufficient gods can have any knowledge of the world and in particular of man.[72]

The reasoning just summarized is based to some extent on Epicurean premises and therefore not evident to all readers. Lucretius repeats therefore while enlarging it an argument which is not dependent on Epicurus' teaching: the nature of things has not been made by divine power for our benefit, for that nature abounds in defects (195–199).[73] The largest part of the world is unfit for human life or habitation. That part which is useful for man would be covered by nature with thorns if man did not resist nature with his sweat and toil, and all his toil is frequently frustrated by exorbitant heat, inundations, and hurricanes. Why does nature give food and increase to the frightful race of wild beasts, the enemies of man? Why does she make men die before their time? Why is it that man alone of all animals is born completely helpless, like a sailor cast away by the cruel waves (200–234)? Man alone is nature's stepchild. This thought, which was at most intimated in Book II, is stated without any concealment or sweetening in Book V. This progress in explicitness and emphasis agrees with the corresponding progress in regard to the teaching as to the end of the world. It is a progress from the sweet or less sad to the sad. Lucretius may have succeeded in showing that the view according to which the gods have produced the world and preserve it forever for the sake of man is not true; he did not show, and he did not mean to show, that that view is frightening. On the contrary, he has tacitly shown that religion is comforting, for on his own showing religion asserts that man is the end or purpose of creation or that man alone, at least among the earthly beings, is akin to the highest beings. The truth which he teaches is much harsher than the teaching of religion.

Lucretius proves the mortality of the world in four arguments. The first and the last arguments make use of the doctrine of the four elements. This causes no difficulty since the elements can be understood as atomic compounds, but it is not necessary that they be so understood. It seems that Lucretius attempts to prove the mortality of the world on the broadest possible ground. In the last argument (380–415) he conceives of the world as constituted by the continuous unholy war among the elements; their contest will be ended by the complete victory of one or another element, that

is, by the destruction of the world. According to the stories, there was once a time when fire won out and another when water won out (the deluge). The ancient Greek poets presented the temporary victory of fire in the story of Phaëthon, according to which the omnipotent father (Jupiter) prevented the destruction of the world by his timely intervention. Lucretius rejects as untrue this story and its implication that the death of the world can or will be prevented by the gods. The omnipotent father himself would be mortal (cf. 318–323 and 258–260).

The second argument in support of the mortality of the world (324–350) is likewise not based on specifically Epicurean premises. The world and hence also the human race are mortal because each had a beginning, and that the world had a beginning is shown by the fact that the past which men remember does not go beyond the Theban and Trojan wars. In fact, the world is young as is shown by the recent origin of some of the arts and especially of philosophy. One cannot explain these facts by cataclysms which left the world itself (heaven, earth, and the species of animals) intact, for if all the works of men and almost all men could be destroyed by a weaker cause, a more grievous cause can destroy all men and the world itself. The third argument (351–379) proves the mortality of the world by showing that the world does not belong to the beings which are necessarily immortal. Lucretius' enumeration of the immortal beings agrees almost literally with the one which he had given when proving the mortality of the soul (III 806–818). The immortal beings are the atoms, the void, and the infinite universe (as distinguished from the world or worlds). But the world does not possess the perfect solidity of the atoms, nor is it void, nor is it the universe; hence the gate of death is not shut on the world, but stands open and looks toward the world with huge wide-gaping maw. This argument would imply that the mortality of the world can be established only on the basis of atomism and therefore that atomism, or rather Epicureanism, is the indispensable basis for denying the divine origin of the world or divine intervention in the world, that is, for liberating the mind from the terrors of religion.

Since the world is mortal, it must have come into being (V 373–376). The proof of the mortality is followed by an exposition of how the world came into being. This exposition seems to complete the proof of the Epicurean doctrine; the infinitely many atoms moving in infinite time through the infinite void explain the world as we know it, since they explain how it came into being: the world is one of the many arrangements of atoms which in a very long time came about through the furious clashes of the blind atoms without the intervention of an ordering mind or a peaceful agreement between the atoms; and once it has come about, it preserves itself for a long time. Order comes out of disorder, discord, war—a war due to the dissimilarity of the atoms and their mutual repulsion (416–448). Owing to its specific atomic composition the earth emerged first and came

to occupy the lowest place in the center of the visible world. As a consequence of its emergence those atoms or atomic compounds which were to form the stars and the ether were driven from the earth and began to form those upper bodies; this change in its turn led to the emergence of the sea and thus to the earth's taking on its final shape. Lucretius speaks in this context of the living bodies of sun and moon, but he means by this no more than that they are not stationary in contrast to the earth which is stationary (449–494; cf. 125). The temporary quasi divinization of sun and moon serves the purpose of bringing out the low estate of the earth, allegedly the Great Mother, the place of man who is allegedly the favorite of the creating gods: the defects of nature, which prove that it is not the work of gods, are above all the defects of the earth.[74]

After having sketched the coming into being of the main parts of the world, Lucretius turns to the heavenly bodies. He begins his discussion of them with the words, "Now let us sing what is the cause of the motions of the stars." The expression "let us sing" occurs nowhere else in the poem. On the only other occasion on which Lucretius speaks of his "singing" (VI 84), he means his exposition of other phenomena aloft.[75] Since he "sings" of the motions of the stars, he is entitled to speak of "the stars of the eternal world" and shortly thereafter even of the earth as "living" (V 509, 514, 538; cf. 476). Singing means magnifying and embellishing. Yet beyond the two examples mentioned Lucretius cannot be said to magnify or embellish the heavenly bodies or their motions. He does not hesitate to speak of Matuta's spreading rosy dawn (656–657), of the moon's beholding the sun setting (709), of Venus or Cupid (737), of Mother Flora (739), and of Ceres and Bacchus (741–742), but the exercise of this poetic license is in no way peculiar to the astronomic part of the poem. One might say that Lucretius exclaims, "Let us sing," when he "sings" least and therefore can indicate in an inconspicuous manner what "singing" means.

What then is peculiar to the astronomic part? Lucretius does not give "the cause" of the motions of the stars, but a variety of incompatible causes; he gives a variety of possible causes since it is impossible to know which is truly the cause (526–533). Strictly speaking, he does not know "the cause of the motions of the stars." Yet ignorance of that cause gives rise to religion (1185–1186) or is the chief justification of religion. Hence it would seem that the human mind is insufficient in the decisive respect. One is therefore tempted to say that one "sings" when one does not know. But the insufficiency mentioned is not peculiar to our knowledge of things aloft (VI 703–711). It would be better to say that Lucretius does not discuss in detail the genesis of the heavenly bodies and their motions, but speaks of them as they are after their genesis has been completed, whereas, as regards the terrestrial beings, he presents their genesis in detail. But why does he proceed so differently in the two cases? The heavenly bodies and their motions are one of the chief reasons, nay, the chief reason, why men

believe that there are gods acting on the world or in the world, and to destroy that belief is one of the two primary purposes of the whole poem.[76] It is therefore all the more remarkable that the astronomic part of the poem is completely free from the attacks on religion in which the poet engages so often. Or, to speak more generally, in the astronomic part Lucretius is completely silent about the nonexistence of the vulgar gods or the existence of the true gods. Lucretius' "singing" means here his complete silence about the problem of the gods. This leaves us with the question with what right singing thus understood can still be described as magnification or embellishment.

After the completion of the astronomic part Lucretius "returns to the youth of the world" (780) in order to give an account of how the terrestrial things came into being. This is the only occasion on which the poet speaks of his "returning" to something; the uniqueness of "I return" corresponds to the uniqueness of "let us sing"; he returns now to nonsinging. The astronomic part is a digression within the context of a Book devoted to the coming into being of the world and its parts. The coming into being of the world and its parts, we recall, is the reverse side of the mortality of the world. The mortality of the world seemed to be incredible because of the belief in gods who created the world. This belief is refuted long before the beginning of the astronomic part and independently of any peculiarly Epicurean assumptions (195–234). The "digression" has the subordinate function of counteracting the impression made by the visible (and completed) heavenly bodies and their motions—an impression which leads to the belief in the gods of religion. Precisely because the "digression" has this subordinate function, it is all the more remarkable that it is more emphatically a "song" than any other part of the first five Books.

The earth brought forth first the plants and then the animals. Even now the earth brings forth some small animals; it is therefore not surprising that in the spring of the world, when the earth was of youthful fertility, that is, when heat and moisture abounded everywhere and yet a mild climate prevailed everywhere, the earth should have brought forth all kinds of animals (783–820). The earth is therefore deservedly called the mother of all living beings; in her youth she was almost literally their mother; through aging she lost her primeval power. In her youth she gave birth to many kinds of monsters or freaks which proved to be unable to procreate and even to live for any length of time; those kinds perished. Only those kinds survived which from the beginning were able to live and to propagate. Some of those kinds survived through their own powers, others because they were entrusted to the protection of man, who preserves them since they are useful to him. When speaking of the species which are entrusted to man's tutelage, Lucretius addresses Memmius for the fourth time in this Book by name (821–877). In the three preceding cases, as well as in the two cases occurring in Book II, he had addressed Memmius by name in antitheolog-

ical contexts.[77] We assume therefore that the present context is likewise antitheological. The poet uses here the language of teleology in order to deny teleology: the domestic animals are entrusted to man, not by nature or gods, but by man himself; man has made it his business to protect them because they are useful to him; nothing is useful to the gods (166);[78] nature produces the most absurd monsters in the same way in which she produces man, whom one might call the whole source of purposefulness in the universe. We must add at once that the critique of theology or rather of teleology[79] is here almost completely concealed. We also note that Lucretius is silent here on the peculiarity of man or on the peculiar "gift" of nature which enabled the human race to survive (cf. 857–863 with III 294–306).

As we have observed, it was necessary for Lucretius to assert that in the beginning the earth had produced various kinds of monsters. It is equally necessary for him to deny that there ever were beings like the Centaurs, the Scylla, or the Chimaera: even in her youth the earth could never have brought forth beasts of different kinds mingled together. The species emerged at the beginning with their distinctive, incommunicable, and unchangeable characters (878–924). This applies, of course, to man as well as to the other animals. The earthborn men and even their progeny partook of the hardness of the earth more than the later generations; they were stronger, healthier, and of greater power of resistance than latter-day men. They lived miserably from what the earth spontaneously offered. They did not know the use of fire or any arts; they had no notion of a common good or of customs and laws; everyone lived by himself for himself alone. They did not know of lasting unions of men and women. They did not fear gods (for they took for granted the necessity of the sun's setting and rising), but they feared wild beasts. The only deity that acted on them was Venus.[80] They did not fear what might happen to them after death, but they feared death unless unbearable pain made them long for death. Yet as they lacked the advantages of life in common and of the arts, they did not suffer from the evils which these cause (925–1010).

Five things brought it about that the human race first began to soften: huts, skins, fire, the living together of men and women, and (the consequence of that living together) the fact that both parents knew their offspring and paid attention to it. On this basis neighboring families began to form friendship with one another by making wordless contracts to the effect that they would not hurt one another, and men began to approve of pity with the weak, that is, with their women and children. Thus men came to live rather peacefully together in small societies (1011–1027). They would have been unable to live together if they had not been able to indicate to one another their various feelings by various sounds. This use of the tongue was not the invention of some individual—man or god—but is as natural in the case of men as in that of the beasts which likewise utter

different sounds when impelled by different feelings (1028–1090). Lucretius is almost completely silent on the conventional ingredient of language which was admitted by Epicurus; [81] he does not deny it, of course.

Lucretius next discusses one of the changes which led to the softening of the human race or to prepolitical society, namely, the invention of fire. He takes up this subject explicitly with regard to a possible silent question of the addressee. This is the only place in which he explicitly refers to a silent question of the addressee. It was lightning, the poet says, that first of all brought fire to the earth for men: lightning, this fear-inspiring happening (1125, 1127, 1219–1221), originally brought men the gift of heat; man's acquaintance with fire is as much the work of nature as his uttering of sounds. Man was taught by the sun to cook food (1091–1104).

After the digressions on language and fire Lucretius returns to his account of human life or living together. The transition from prepolitical society to political society was effected by men of superior minds. Kings founded cities and assigned property to each man; they did not give equal shares to all, but considered in their distribution above all beauty and strength and to a lesser degree intelligence. With the invention of hereditary property and of the use of gold the rich took the place of the beautiful and strong. One might say that the qualities by nature good were replaced by the qualities good only by convention. This change eventually led to the destruction of kingship and to a condition in which everyone sought for himself governmental power. The ensuing violence and discord were ended when men listened to some who taught them to establish magistracies and laws. This, however, was not simply a blessing. Laws entail punishments for transgressions of the laws. Henceforth the fear of punishment mars the prizes of life. To understand this apparently strange statement of the poet, it is sufficient to think of the Epicurean withdrawal from political life of which the law in principle disapproves. It is not easy for the lawbreakers to lead a quiet life. Their crimes may not be noticed by gods or men, but the criminals can never be certain of that; at least people say that many criminals have betrayed themselves in their sleep or when raving in disease (1105–1160). Lucretius does not say that it is impossible for the lawbreaker to lead a quiet life; [82] the view that it is impossible is a salutary convention. He does not contradict himself by referring to the possibility that crimes might be observed and punished by the gods,[83] for that possibility is believed in by many criminals (cf. III 48–54) and that belief can therefore sometimes act as a restraint. This means, however, that according to Lucretius religion is of a utility which is not altogether negligible.

Just as the passage dealing with prepolitical society was followed by a discussion of the origin of language and of the use of fire, the passage dealing with political society is followed by a discussion of the origins of religion and the arts. Fire and the arts belong together. It is reasonable to expect that language and religion belong together. Language as discussed by

Lucretius is, so to speak, entirely by nature; calculation, consideration of utility, or convention is barely mentioned (1028–1029). Religion as discussed by Lucretius is entirely by nature; he is altogether silent on its utility, although he has drawn our attention to it immediately before beginning his discussion of religion; he is altogether silent on a possible conventional ingredient of religion.

The discussion of religion (1161–1240) is, according to Bailey,[84] "the longest and fullest treatment of the nature of the gods and the causes and function of religion in the poem." It comes closer than any other section to being the copious speech proving "the tenuous nature" of the gods and of their abodes which the poet had promised in V 148–155. It is prepared by the remarkable silence on the problem of the gods which he had observed since V 110–234, that is, since the passage which contains the most elaborate critique occurring in the poem of the divinity or the divine origin of the world. The discussion of religion is the only passage in which Lucretius tells the reader precisely what we know experientially, or more specifically by sight, of the gods' being and nature. In an earlier remark (III 16–18) he had made one expect that we have direct knowledge not only of the gods' being but even of their abodes. Strictly speaking, however, the present passage gives an account, not of the gods' being and nature, but of the cause which has spread among great nations the powers of the gods and filled the cities with divine worship proceeding from shuddering awe. The account of what precisely we know of the gods' being or nature is a subordinate part of the account of how that knowledge came into being in the past: the whole account is framed in the imperfect tense. The discussion of religion, in contradistinction to the astronomic part, is devoted to coming into being.

Lucretius is prepared to state "the cause" of men's awareness of the gods and of their worshiping the gods. But he states two causes. We recall that at the beginning of the astronomic part he promised to expound "the cause" of the motions of the stars and then stated more than one cause (508–533). The present case is different. According to Bailey,[85] Lucretius "assigns two reasons for [the universal belief in gods], though he does not, as he should have done, explain that one of these reasons is true and the other false." As a rule it is wise to abstain from telling a superior man what he should have done. Transgressions of this rule cannot be traced to democracy, but stem from a frailty which is effective in all regimes. The two reasons given by Lucretius are to explain not only "the universal belief in gods" but divine worship as commonly practised in the cities as well; perhaps "the true reason" is not sufficient for explaining that divine worship. Besides, "the true reason" explains how men came to believe in beautiful gods, but men do not universally believe in beautiful gods.[86]

Even then, Lucretius tells us, the races of mortals saw with their mind while being awake and still more in sleep the glorious forms or faces of the

gods and the marvelous sizes of their bodies. This much and not more is unambiguously said to have been "seen" and still to be "seen" of the gods by men awake. The beautiful forms and the great bulk do not by themselves prove that their owners are living beings; gods must be capable of feeling or sensing. Men did not "see" that the gods sense, but they "attributed" sense to the gods because they "saw" the gods moving their limbs. Yet this inference is of questionable validity. Men see the gods chiefly in sleep; in sleep they also "see" dead men moving their limbs, that is, they seem to see this or they believe they see it (IV 757–772). Accordingly Lucretius does not unambiguously say that the gods were seen to move their limbs; the expression which he uses (*videbantur*) can as well mean that the gods seemed to move their limbs. The whole sentence reads as follows: "They attributed sense to the gods because they seemed to move their limbs and to utter haughty sounds befitting their resplendent form and their ample strength." The gods' sensing, that is, living, is not experienced, but a human "addition" to the experienced (cf. V 1195 and IV 462–468); the experience in itself is in fact not more than a seeming.

What is true of the gods' sensing is also true of their eternal life: men "gave" them eternal life, and "they believed" that gods possessing such great strength could "not easily" be overcome by any force; beings which are not easily overcome by any force are not necessarily eternal. "They believed" the gods to be outstanding in good fortune because none of the gods was ever troubled by fear of death, and "in sleep they saw them achieve many wondrous things without undergoing any toil" (V 1169–1182). One is curious to know whether men saw while awake that the gods were never troubled by fear of death, and which wondrous things the gods were seen to do; there is no suggestion that they were seen to think or to understand or in any other way to know the truth. There is also no suggestion that they were seen to be simply self-sufficient and hence unable to act on the world and within it and in particular to act on men. On the contrary, since the first cause of religion as presented by Lucretius consists to a considerable extent of human additions to what was genuinely seen or experienced, there is no reason why men should not have imagined also that the beings possessing beautiful faces and enormous sizes, which appeared to them in their dreams and seemed to utter haughty sounds, were not also their haughty lords threatening them with terrible punishments. This may be the reason why Lucretius declares that he will set forth "the cause," that is, a single cause, of religion. However this may be, he is concerned with pointing to a cause which has nothing whatever to do with men's dreams; therefore he adduces the following cause: men were induced by their beholding the celestial phenomena, of which they do not know the causes, to trace those phenomena to the gods. In particular, frightening and nocturnal phenomena of this kind were held to be threats on the part of the gods or proofs of their anger. In the light of "the longest

and fullest treatment of the nature of the gods and the causes and function of religion in the poem" as well as of our previous observations,[87] we shall say that the fundamental theologoumenon is meant to articulate in the most adequate manner our notion of the gods as *entia perfectissima:* the most perfect beings cannot possibly act on the world or in the world; the fundamental theologoumenon, in contradistinction to the ontological proof, is not meant to prove the existence of gods; their existence is not known.

This result is not contradicted by those writings of Epicurus that have come down to us in nonfragmentary form. In the case of fragments we cannot know how the thoughts expressed in them would appear in the light of the whole to which they belonged. The *Principal Opinions* never speaks of gods or of the divine.[88] According to the first of those *Opinions,* "that which is blessed and indestructible suffers no trouble nor does it cause trouble to any other; hence it is not affected by fear or favor; for everything of this kind occurs only in what is weak." This statement is ordinarily taken as an assertion of the fundamental theologoumenon; but there are "immortal goods" which wise men can enjoy.[89] The *Letter to Herodotus,* which is an epitome of Epicurus' teaching on nature, never speaks of gods or of the divine; it does say that "in the indestructible and blessed nature there can in no way be anything which can bring about dissolution or confusion" (78); this statement could be made by a monotheist as well as by an atheist. The *Letter to Herodotus* also teaches that one must not believe that the same things are blessed and indestructible and at the same time will or do or cause things that are incompatible with bliss and indestructibility (81). The *Letter to Pythocles,* which is a summary of Epicurus' teaching about the things aloft, warns its reader against having recourse to "the divine nature" in order to explain celestial phenomena: one must leave the divine nature unmolested in its complete bliss (97; cf. 113 and 115–116). The utmost one can say is that the *Letter to Pythocles* uses the fundamental theologoumenon as a bulwark against mythical explanations, but those explanations are known to be impossible independently of the fundamental theologoumenon (cf. 104). The *Letter to Pythocles* refers once to the *intermundia* (89) without even alluding to their being the abodes of the gods. Epicurus sets forth his teaching regarding the gods and especially their existence in his *Letter to Menoeceus* (123–124), which is in fact devoted to ethics; he has found no place for it in his physics, that is, his teaching regarding the whole. No one in his right mind will say that the Epicurean gods are postulated by practical reason: Epicurus did not "find it necessary to deny knowledge in order to make room for faith."

To return to Lucretius, according to what one may call his official teaching the truth is sad because the world is not divine nor of divine origin, but the truth is attractive or comforting above all because the most lovable is

sempiternal since there are gods, blessed and immortal beings that are akin to man rather than to any other beings. Yet if the gods are not, the most divine being, the being most resplendent, most beneficent, and most high in rank is the wise man with his frail happiness. The frailty of human happiness cannot be overcome by any conquest of nature, by the subjection of the whole to human use, for this would require among other things the emancipation of the desires for unnecessary things and therefore the certainty of human misery, of the fate of Sisyphus. Besides, the Epicurean sage has as little incentive to charity—to feeding the hungry and clothing the naked—as the Epicurean gods; like the Epicurean gods he is beneficent by being what he is rather than by doing anything. It is in agreement with this that Lucretius' "political philosophy" is only an account of the coming into being of political society; it does not deal with the question of the best regime: no regime deserves to be called good; philosophy cannot transform, or contribute toward transforming, political society.

Religion is presented by Lucretius as belonging to political society (V 1161–1162, 1222; cf. 1174 and 1111), which does not mean that it does not have ingredients antedating political society. It belongs to political society because laws, punishment, and fear of punishment belong to political society (1136–1151). Fear of punishment and fear of the gods belong together; fear of the gods is fear of divine punishment. Fear of the gods leads to men's despising themselves; Lucretius no longer says that it leads to crimes;[90] he says now that it leads to the sacrifice of beasts; he no longer speaks, as he did at the beginning, of human sacrifices. Ignorance of the causes of the motions of the heavenly bodies is not the sole or sufficient cause of men's believing in angry gods. (Hence astronomy is not sufficient for liberating men from the fear of the gods.) At least as important in this respect is men's bad conscience; for instance, the awareness of haughty kings that they have done or said haughty things which deserve punishment (1194–1240). We see again that religion may exert a salutary restraint. It is surely greatly preferable that the restraint be exerted by philosophy, which restrains the desires while it takes away the fear of the gods. This implies, however, that philosophy belongs to political society no less than religion does or that philosophy is impossible in prepolitical society: philosophy presupposes a high development of the arts. In prepolitical society Venus alone held sway. In political society, just as in nature, Mars rather than Venus holds sway.[91] Prepolitical society is in one sense more natural than political society; but it cannot be "the state of nature" since man lives according to nature only by virtue of philosophizing. The same man who in prepolitical society would have been a member of his tribe, like everybody else, may in political society lead the strictly private life of the philosopher.

At the beginning of his account of the genesis of the arts Lucretius speaks of the discovery of copper, gold, and iron as well as of silver and

lead. The discovery of gold was an important step in the transition from the rule of those by nature superior to the rule of the rich (1113–1114). Through trial and error men learned to prefer copper to gold and silver because of its greater usefulness; the now prevailing preference for gold emerged at a later date (1241–1280). The use of iron was discovered last. When speaking of the discovery of the nature of iron Lucretius apostrophizes Memmius by name for the last time in the poem. He says: "It is easy for you to know by yourself, Memmius, how the nature of iron was discovered" (1281–1282). The poet had not used the second person since verse 1091. No such rarity of the use of the second person occurs anywhere else in the poem.[92] The present use of the second person is emphasized by the simultaneous use of the vocative of Memmius. The poet had apostrophized Memmius by name after Book I only in antitheological contexts; the present context is even less visibly antitheological than the preceding one (cf. pages 125–126 above). But between the present use of the vocative of Memmius and of the second person and the preceding use of the vocative of Memmius or of the second person there occurred the statement par excellence on the gods: Lucretius saw no need for emphasizing the importance of that statement. Lucretius mentions Memmius for the last time when speaking of the discovery of iron; iron is particularly useful in war; the connection between Memmius and war was indicated near the beginning of the poem (I 40–43). How much Lucretius is concerned with opening his account of the genesis of the arts with the theme "war" is shown by the fact that the sequel to what he says on the discovery of the metals deals with the various stages in which beasts were employed in war. Lucretius uses this occasion to indicate how much the progress of the arts takes place through error and trial; he makes us imagine for a moment that men foolishly tried to use bulls, boars, and even lions against their enemies, perhaps because, despairing of victory, they wished to harm their enemies while committing suicide (1281–1349).

Lucretius turns from the progress of the art or arts of war to weaving. By this he does not mean to turn from a man's art to a woman's art—the superior sex invented even the art of weaving, which is thought to be a preserve of the inferior sex—but from the arts of war to the arts of peace. Still, the peaceful art exercised commonly by men and hence higher in rank than weaving is agriculture, which is the next subject of the poet. The first teacher of agriculture and arboriculture was indeed nature herself, but men improved on the first lessons. Nature also taught men the rudiments of music, and reason raised the rustic Muse to its height. Lucretius presents the emergence of the various arts in accordance with the order of their rank. He therefore turns from music to knowledge of the seasons, that is, of one of the most visible signs of the sure order of nature; this knowledge is the last discovery discussed by him in any detail. In discussing music (as distinguished from knowledge of the seasons) he alludes to the fact that

the enjoyments of the rustic Muse, despite their rudeness, embody some of the purest subphilosophic enjoyments of present-day men.[93] While this kind of music survives into the present in an improved form, present-day men are not happier than the earthborn men at the beginning who could not suffer from the lack of pleasures which they did not know. Progress within many arts is due to the desire for novel or even greater pleasures, that is, by the ignorance of the term of true pleasure. Hence this kind of progress goes hand in hand with the progress of war. This is not to deny that the progress of the arts is on the whole a progress of knowledge, a progress which culminates in Epicurus' work. The order of the arts as presented at the end of Book V follows the same principle as the order of outstanding men which occurred near the end of Book III (1024–1044).[94]

VII. On Book VI

The proem to this Book[95] is a corrective of the proem to Book V, just as the proem to Book IV is a corrective of the proem to Book III, and the proem to Book II is a corrective of the proem to Book I. Lucretius now praises Epicurus again as a man, as a mortal (cf. I 66–67); he no longer praises him as a god. He had praised him as a god with a view to the fact that he was the greatest benefactor of men; but one cannot be a god while being a benefactor of men. What survives Epicurus is his "divine discoveries" and his glory. Lucretius is silent about himself and his poetry. He praises Epicurus as a guide toward the highest good, as men's liberator from care or fear; he does not speak here in so many words of Epicurus' having liberated men from fear of gods or of hell. He alludes to those fears by saying that the race of men for the most part suffers from unfounded cares: a human life simply without care is impossible. In accordance with this Lucretius makes it clear that Epicurus' discoveries came at the end or near the end of that progress of the arts which is necessary to supply men with what they need and for making human life as safe as possible (1–42).

Lucretius next reminds us of what he has done in the preceding Book: he has shown that the world is mortal or has come into being, and he has expounded most of what necessarily happens in heaven. He is silent about the second half of Book V in which he has set forth the coming into being of the world or its parts. He promises to discuss in Book VI a certain kind of terrestrial and celestial things (43–50). This means that he will no longer deal with the coming into being of the world or its parts; the expositions given in Book VI are therefore akin to those given in the astronomic part of Book V, as distinguished from those given in the second half of Book V; they are cosmologic, rather than cosmogonic. The cosmogonic second half of Book V which contains the theological statement par excellence is thus surrounded by cosmologic portions. To the extent to which

this is true, Book VI makes us forget the coming into being, and therewith the death, of the world. Lucretius has reminded us of that sad truth even in the latter part of Book V, which is so single-mindedly devoted to coming into being as distinguished from perishing, by speaking of the ambiguity of the progress of the arts. Yet at the very end of Book V (1440–1457) he has become silent about that ambiguity. But it suffices to compare the last verses of Book V with the last verses of Book VI in order to see that the poet's use of honey is judicious; he does not permit the honey to make us insensitive to the wormwood.

The phenomena to be dealt with in Book VI are traced by men to the gods whom they believe to be their dreadful masters. It is undoubtedly true that the gods lead a life free from all care and that fear of the gods is incompatible with pure worship or perception of the gods. Yet it is also true that the error which leads to fear of the gods is uprooted only by the *verissima ratio*, that is, by the natural explanation of the phenomena which induce ignorant men to believe in divine wrath. The expression *verissima ratio* occurs nowhere else in the poem. One of the things which Lucretius must therefore do is to "sing" of the true causes and effects of storms and lightnings. He invokes the Muse Calliope, who is "rest to men and joy to gods," to be his leader (51–95). Calliope now takes the place of Venus; Venus is not even mentioned any more in Book VI. Calliope had been the Muse invoked by Empedocles. Empedocles was both a philosopher and a poet. He was surpassed by Democritus and above all by Epicurus. Yet in surpassing Empedocles, Democritus and Epicurus had separated philosophy entirely from poetry. Poetry became at best the handmaid of philosophy. Yet the poet possesses insights which Epicurus may have lacked, above all the understanding of men's attachment to the world and what this implies. By restoring the union of philosophy and poetry, by presenting the true and final philosophic teaching poetically, Lucretius may be said to surpass Epicurus; the Lucretian presentation of the truth is superior to the Epicurean presentation. Yet if we consider the crucial importance of the Epicurean gods in the Epicurean presentation of the truth, are we not driven to say that in the decisive respect Epicurus too is a poet? Do the Epicurean gods not magnify or embellish the whole?

Lucretius explains thunder (96–159) and lightning (160–218) in order to explain the thunderbolt (219–378), for the thunderbolt, being the strongest of all fires, is together with its concomitants the most frightening thing coming from heaven. The explanation of the thunderbolt naturally leads up to an attack on the Tyrrhenian kind of divination (which had been taken over by the Romans) and, more generally, on the theological view: thunderbolts strike the innocent as well as the guilty; nay, they strike the likenesses and images of the gods (379–422). One need not be an atomist in order to be impressed by arguments of this kind. Lucretius explains thereafter at some length three phenomena akin to thunder-

storms: the waterspouts, which are a kind of abortive thunderstorm, as well as clouds and rain which go together with thunderstorms (423–534). In explaining these phenomena Lucretius does not emphasize that they are frightening (430). The case of earthquakes, to which he turns next (535–607), is different; earthquakes are directly linked with the poet's primary and fundamental concern; they offer the most massive proof of the possibility of the death of the world; they give as it were a foretaste of that death.[96] Lucretius does not speak here, as he did in the section on the thunderbolt, of men's tracing the terrifying phenomenon to the wrath of the gods; he only alludes to men's believing that the gods in their kindness vouch for the sempiternity of the world (601–602); on the other hand, he says explicitly that men "fear to believe" that the world will die a natural death (565–567).[97] It is this fear for the world, that is, for this world, for everything that is a man's own or his nation's own, which gives rise to the belief in gods and therewith also to the fear of the gods; the fear of gods is not the fundamental fear. The fundamental fear gives rise in the first place to fear of that very fear, to fear of the most terrible truth. The poet, having exposed himself to the fear of the terrible truth, can calmly face that truth. His courage is not in need of support by belief in social progress between now and the death of the world or by other beliefs. The verses under discussion are the central digression occurring in the body of Book VI; they prepare the end of the poem, the description of the plague.[98]

Men wonder, Lucretius continues, that nature does not make the sea bigger since all rivers from every quarter fall into the sea. There is only one step from this wondering to fear of a deluge that destroys all life on land. Lucretius disregards this apparent possibility (608–638). The eruptions of Mount Etna are frightening to the tribes living nearby. Those eruptions as well as earthquakes and similar phenomena are frightening because of their gigantic size; but they are of very small size compared with the infinite whole of which a whole world is an infinitesimal part. The discussion of the eruptions of Mount Etna opens the discussion of other local phenomena or of other phenomena indicated by place names: the flood of the Nile, the Avernian Lake, the spring near the shrine of Ammon and the one within the sea at Aradus, and finally the magnet (cf. 906–909). Lucretius thus prepares the description of the plague in Athens—a description reasonably preceded by an explanation of pestilences in general. The only subject treated in the second half of Book VI which he explicitly connects with his primary concern is the Avernian places; these places must not be thought to be places from which the gods of the dead lead the souls to the shores of Acheron (749–768). In giving the true reason for this phenomenon (769–780), Lucretius makes it clearer than ever before that the earth is as much the destroyer as the mother of all living beings. The last Book is, less than any other Book, concerned with embellishment.

NOTES

1. Cf. Hesiod, *Theogony* 11–21: Ares is not explicitly mentioned among the gods praised by the Muses. Cf. *Works and Days* 145–146.
2. Cf. the *virum* in VI 5 with the *deus ille fuit, deus* in V 8.
3. Cf. especially 1259–1263.
4. Cf. 1197–1204, 1210–1211, 1226–1229 with Thucydides II 49.8 and 51.6.
5. 1183, 1212; cf. 1208–1212 with Thucydides II 49.8; consider the fact that there is no passage in Lucretius which corresponds to II 53.
6. Cf. 1239–1246 with Thucydides II 51.5.
7. Cf. 1278–1286 (consider especially the last words of the poem) with Thucydides II 53.4, beginning and 52.4. Cf. Epicurus' unconcern with his burial: Diogenes Laertius X 118.
8. In his letter to Menoeceus (134) Epicurus says that there is something worse than the tale of the gods: the fate or necessity of which the *physikoi* speak.
9. Cf. 1156–1162, 1182–1185, 1212.
10. III 1–30.
11. Cf. I 117–119, 121, 124, 136–137, 143–145.
12. V 925–1010, 1087–1090; cf. VI 601–602.
13. V 1211–1217, 1236–1240, 91–109, 114–121, 373–375, 1186–1187; VI 565–567, 597–607, 650–652, 677–679.
14. Cf. Thucydides I 22.4.
15. Hence the conclusion of the whole reasoning in 205–207. The fourth argument is the only one which shows that many first bodies are common to many things as letters ("elements") are common to words, that is, that there is something more common than the heterogeneous seeds of the various kinds of animals and plants.
16. Lucretius does not regard plants as living beings: I 774 (cf. 821 and II 702–703).
17. Cf. I 107–108. Cf. the emphasis on numbers, that is, on small numbers, in 419–420, 432, 445–446, 449–450, 503.
18. I 803–808, 897–900. Cf. 770.
19. Cf. II 185–190.
20. I 28, 136–145, 933–934.
21. Cicero, *De republica* III 26; *De finibus* II 15.
22. I 716–725; cf. VI 680 ff.
23. I 675–678, 684–689, 778–781, 848–856, 915–920.
24. I 803–808 and 897–900. In I 803–808 the addressee tries to prove that without the four elements there could not be growth of plants and animals; Lucretius strengthens this argument by stating that without the four elements there could not be human life. In the parallels in IV 633–672 and VI 769–780 he also speaks of diseases and death.
25. Cf. the *evolvamus* and *pervideamus* in I 954 and 956.
26. I 1021–1022; cf. 328 and 1110.
27. I 1052.
28. Cf. I 1112 with V 373–375.
29. Only in this context does Lucretius refer to things Roman in the proem to Book II. He no longer refers to things Roman in the proems to the following Books.
30. Cf. also the implicit contrast between the wandering or restless atoms and the wandering mind in II 82–83. Cf. also the contrast between the fall of the atoms

and the fall of certain philosophers (I 741). The void is motionless or quiet (II 238); yet this quietness has no kinship with the quietness which the mind needs (cf. I 639).

31. Cf. also the emphasis on generating in II 62–64. Cf. the *semper* in II 76 with the *nunc* in V 194.
32. Cf. I 1025; II 573–576, V 380–381, 391–392.
33. In the two cases in which the poet addressed Memmius by name in Book I he also did this while polemicizing against "some," that is, while indicating Memmius' likely resistance to Epicureanism. The same is true of the two cases in Book I (803–808, 897–900) in which he presents Memmius as opposing Epicureanism in direct speech.
34. II 169, 178, I 105. Consider again the initial statement about the theme of the whole poem in I 54–55. Cf. Spinoza, *Tr. theol.-pol.* XVI 10–11 (Bruder).
35. Letter to Menoeceus 134.
36. II 481–482, 496–507; cf. V 1171, and 1177 (*auctos.*). Consider the unusual section-beginnings in II 478–479 and 522–523.
37. II 569–580; cf. 174–181 and V 220–234.
38. Cf. IV 761: the dead are held by "death and earth."
39. As for the difference between the second and the fifth items, cf. Democritus (Diels) B 278.
40. Literally, "the everlasting wound"; cf. "the everlasting wound" of Mars in I 34, that is, shortly before the first statement of the fundamental theologoumenon.
41. Cf. II 886–888, 902–903, 931, 983.
42. Cf. III 879–889.
43. Cf. Bailey's edition and commentary (Oxford: 1947), p. 956.
44. Cf. V 115–125, 144–145.
45. Cf. Cicero, *De natura deorum* I 52.
46. Note the contrast with I 398–417, the conclusion of the section dealing with the void.
47. Cf. I 1052–1053 in the parallel.
48. He does not invoke the gods in order to confirm a theologoumenon; cf. the parallel case in II 434 (*pro divom numina sancta*). No other reference to the hearts of the gods occurs in the poem.
49. Cf. Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 761.
50. "Lucretius is a poet not to be suspected of giving way to superstitious terrors; yet when he supposes the whole mechanism of nature laid open by the master of his philosophy, his transport on this magnificent view, which he has represented in the colours of such bold and lively poetry, is overcast with a shade of secret dread and horror." Burke, *The Sublime and Beautiful*, II sect. 5.
51. Reconsider from this point of view I 80–83.
52. Cf. Plato, *Phaedo* 86c2–d4 (Simmias). Cf. the sarcasm in Lucretius' critique of pre-existence (the premise of Cebes' argument) in III 776–783.
53. Just as "we all" who "stem from heavenly seed" (II 991) are not merely "all we human beings." Cf. also page 96 above.
54. Cf. III 753.
55. III 371, V 622. Of Empedocles he says that Sicily does not seem to have possessed something more sacred than him (I 729–730).
56. Cf. V 177–178.
57. Expressions like *fateare necessest, cur credis, quod si forte putas, quid dubitas, quod si forte credis* do not occur in the first part of Book III (31–424), but occur in the second part.
58. Cf. 754, 760, 765–766.
59. Note the contrast between the avoidance of the first person plural in the verses

dealing with the Punic Wars (833–837) and the frequency of the first person plural ("we," that is, we human beings, not we Romans) in the rest of the passage.

60. Compare the procedure of the Xenophontic Socrates who apostrophizes Xenophon and no one else as "you wretch" and "you fool" (*Memorabilia* I 3.11,13). Cf. Plato, *Republic* 595c10–596a1.
61. Cf. also I 130–135.
62. V 1161–1193. Cf. VI 76–77.
63. II 609; VI 419–420.
64. Passive forms of *videre* occur here seventeen times with the unambiguous meaning of "to seem." Cf. I 726 (*videtur*) and 727 (*fertur*).
65. Cf. the "we" in 37. Cf. VI 970–972.
66. Cf. IV 969–970.
67. *Nunc age . . . accipe . . . percipe* (722–723).
68. Cf. III 12–27.
69. Cf. II 1023–1047.
70. Cf. I 80 ff.
71. III 294–301. Cf. II 265–268 and V 1325.
72. Cf. II, 478–484.
73. Cf. II, 175–182. The promise there made to Memmius is fulfilled in the present context.
74. Cf. especially 233–234 with 198. Cf. 495–505. This step is prepared by the transition from 258–260 (the earth is the parent of all) to 318–323 (the sky is the parent of all). Cf. II 598–599 with 991–998.
75. VI 84; cf. 255, 259, 376. Verbal forms of *canere* occur ten times; in nine cases the word is applied to human singing or music. *Cantus* occurs four times and *canor* twice.
76. V 1183–1193, 1205–1221, 83–87; cf. I 62–69.
77. Cf. pages 95–96, 119–120, 121–123 above.
78. This is so despite the fact that nature supplies everything to the gods (III 23).
79. Cf. pages 116–117 above.
80. Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 1474 note, refers to Empedocles (B 128, lines 1–3): "for those men Ares was not god nor Kydoimos nor Zeus the king nor Kronos nor Poseidon but only Kypris the queen." Lucretius indicates the absence of Zeus, Ares, and Poseidon in V 958–959 and 999–1006.
81. *Letter to Herodotus* 75–76.
82. Cf. Plato, *Republic* 365c6–d1. Cf. the *plerumque* in V 1153 and the *ferantur* in 1159.
83. Cf. Cicero, *De finibus* I 51.
84. *Op cit.*, p. 1507.
85. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
86. Cf. Xenophanes B 16.
87. See pages 99–100, 114–115, 117–118, 121–122 above. Cf. I 132–135.
88. The *Gnomologium Vaticanum* differs in this respect from the *Principal Opinions;* cf. Nos. 24, 33, and 65.
89. *Letter to Menoeceus*, end; *Gnomologium Vaticanum* No. 78.
90. Cf. pages 121–122 above.
91. Cf. page 95 above.
92. If I am not mistaken, the second person is used in Book I (consisting of 1117 verses) 91 times; in Book II (1174), 122 times; in Book III (1094), 112 times; in Book IV (1287), 89 times; in Book V (1457), 49 times; and in Book VI (1286), 62 times. I disregarded the cases in which the second person is used of Venus, Epicurus, or Calliope.

93. Cf. 1392–1411 with II 29–33.
94. Cf. also the ascent from political life to poetry in 1440–1445; cf. also 1448–1451 and 332–337.
95. Cf. page 81 above.
96. Cf. V 95–109 and 1236–1240.
97. Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1050b22–24; cf. *On the Heaven* 270b1–16.
98. Cf. page 81 above.